LONG LIVE VINYL

Latest vinyl release, turntable and accessory reviews +

PET SHOP BUYS
A superfan's guide to shopping for the pop duo

RECORD STORE DAY
Behind the vinyl celebration and our guide to the best ever releases

THE RARE & ESSENTIAL
A complete guide to collecting...

PINK FLOYD

Ultimate Collector
Meet the man with a million records

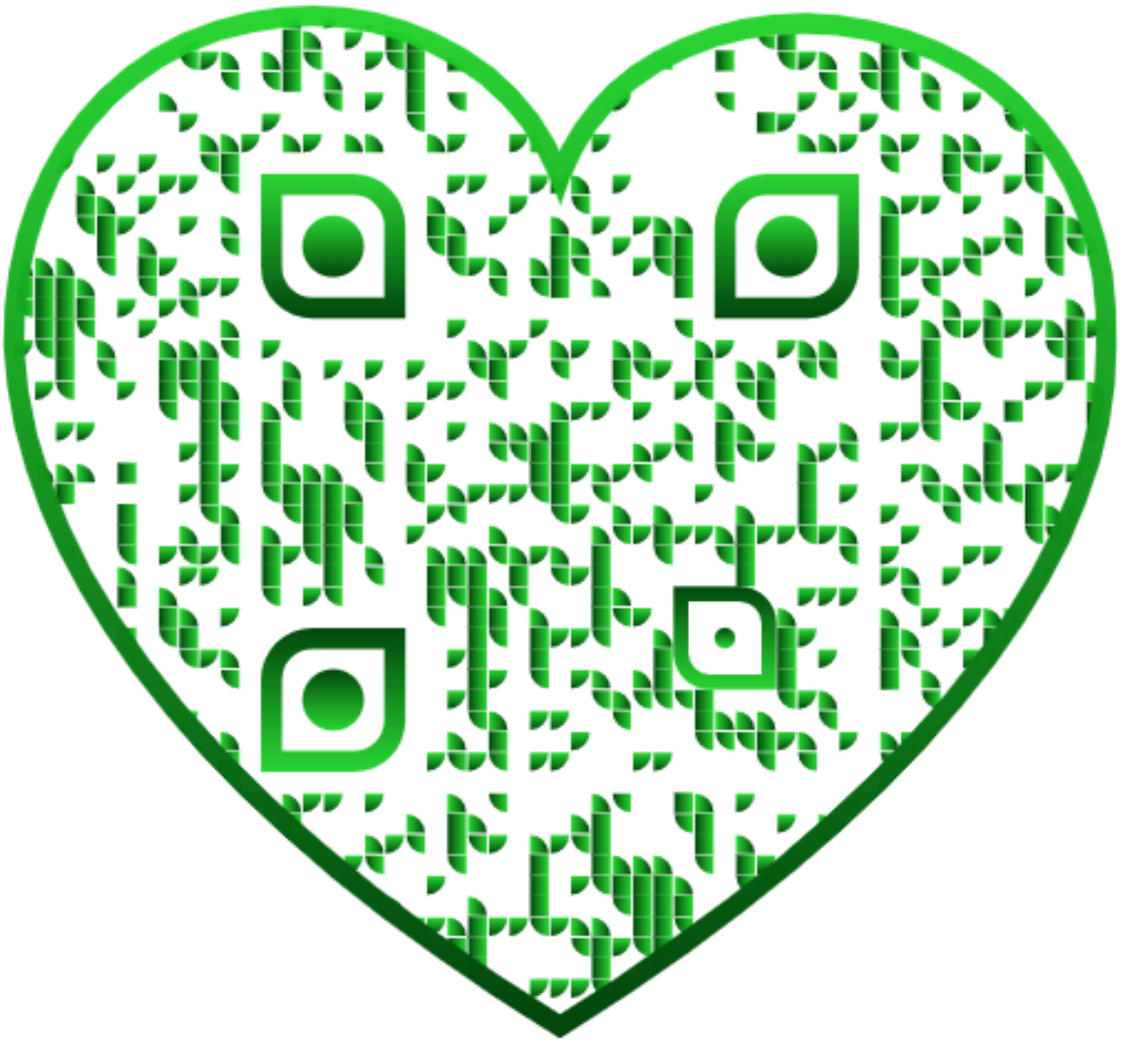
The Trip SOHO
Exploring the capital of vinyl shopping

MAXI JAZZ
Inside the Faithless star's eclectic vinyl collection

CLASSIC MODE
How Violator made (and SOFAD broke) them

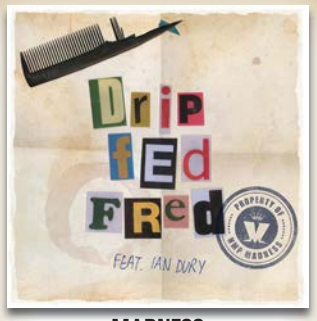
ANTHEM
ISSUE 02
MAY 2017

THE new MAGAZINE FOR VINYL LOVERS



CELEBRATING TEN YEARS OF RECORD STORE DAY™

APRIL 22, 2017



MADNESS
DRIP FED FRED / JOHNNY THE HORSE
7" AA SIDE

Two classic Wonderful-era tracks that have never been released on vinyl before. **Packaged in a ransom note and including an A3 poster.**

ART OF NOISE
MOMENTS IN LOVE
10" PICTURE

Share a 'Moments in Love' with the Art of Noise. "The hare" - **a limited edition mask shaped picture disc.**

URIAH HEEP
LIVE 73
180G SPLATTER VINYL

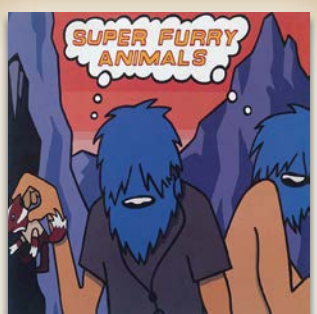
Re-mastered and pressed on 180g heavyweight "splatter vinyl". Full colour inner bags, original liner notes, period reproduction UK tour brochure. **50 copies signed at random.**

GILBERT O'SULLIVAN
HIMSELF
GATEFOLD VINYL

Seminal album, re-issued on vinyl for the first time. **Two hand written letters** from Gilbert, inserted at random. A further 25 copies of the gatefold vinyl will be signed and shrink-wrapped.

ELP
BRAIN SALAD SURGERY
7" SINGLE

Rigid, clear vinyl replica of the sought-after 1973 NME covermount flexi-disc single. Featuring the **original gatefold, die-cut cardboard sleeve** and H.R. Giger artwork.



SUPER FURRY ANIMALS
THE INTERNATIONAL LANGUAGE OF SCREAMING
7" SINGLE

20th anniversary re-issue of the original 1997 hit single, taken from the album 'Radiator'. **Amazing new picture disc artwork** designed by legendary SFA artist Pete Fowler.

FEEDER
FORGET ABOUT TOMORROW / JUST THE WAY I'M FEELING
7" SINGLE

Classic, white vinyl, AA side single of these 2003 Feeder hits, in clear PVC bag. **First time with these tracks as a vinyl single.**

THE ZOMBIES
I WANT YOU BACK AGAIN
7" SINGLE

The Zombies present 50 years of 'I Want You Back Again'. For the first time ever, enjoy **the original 1965 version** together with the 2015 version.

VENOM
AT WAR WITH SATAN
12" PICTURE DISC

Limited Edition 12" Picture Disc of the classic semi-concept album that tells the story of a war between Heaven and Hell where the latter side wins.

SMALL FACES
ITCHYCOO PARK
10" PICTURE DISC

Re-mastered original mono mix plus 1967 stereo mix by Eddie Kramer with a longer end-fade and additional vocals by Steve Marriott.

VARIOUS ARTISTS
TIGHTEN UP VOLUME 2
PICTURE DISC

This special pressing comes presented in a cut-out sleeve, housing a stunning vinyl picture disc depicting Trojan's iconic label on one side and the classic sleeve design on the other.

HOPETON LEWIS / VIN GORDON & THE SUPERSONICS
THERE SHE GOES / REGGAY TROMBONE
1,000 'NUMBERED'

Limited edition featuring two previously unreleased boss reggae tracks and housed in Trojan's much-loved iconic Hot Shot picture sleeve.

BMG

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Welcome...

We all love collecting, but there's collecting and then there's *collecting*. In the case of Phil Swern, our lead interviewee in this issue, it's *collecting* in as severe an italic font as this design software I'm using will allow. With more than a million records, this man has taken the gathering of music to an extreme, but has still managed to incorporate his habit into a career (or, more correctly, chosen a career to bolster his habit!). So there's a very good reason that he's called 'The Collector' but the thing about Phil is that, not only is he the most modest person you could possibly meet, he also casually throws in the most incredible anecdotes into his story like they are everyday occurrences. 'And so I got into a lift with Jimi Hendrix and we had cucumber sandwiches and tea,' to paraphrase just one.

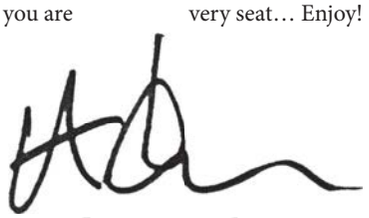
With more than a million records, this man has taken the gathering of music to something of an extreme...

Anyone who has collected may recall the moment when their casual gathering became an obsession, when the simple ordering of ABC became OCD. With Phil, it happened when he was just three years of age…

In different but rather momentous news, the magazine you are holding is now monthly. We had an extraordinary response to the first issue, itself a 12" collector's special. Sadly, that larger format did really make it a limited edition – the bloody thing just wouldn't fit on the shelves of enough newsagents, so we had to chop it. So if you have that issue, treasure it like you do your rarest vinyl. One day it may be worth as much.

What we take away, though, we make up for with a flexi disc – more on that on page 8 – and rest assured, the flexi format will feature more in issues to come.

I'll finish by listing some more highlights from this issue. Andy Price's Floyd feature takes centre stage – a collecting guide to their rarities and besties. I get all Modal with Depeche's finest on page 70, while Ian Peel selects the best Record Store Day releases of the last decade on page 21. Mark Elliott provides another entertaining trip, this time through Soho, and Andrew Dineley takes a journey through his Pet Shop Boys memorabilia on page 78. Finally, Mr Gary Walker is entertained by Maxi Jazz on page 86. You'll be seeing a lot more of him in the next issue – Walker that is, not Jazz – as we welcome him to this very seat… Enjoy!



Andy Jones *Editor*

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WWW.RECORDSTOREDAY.COM

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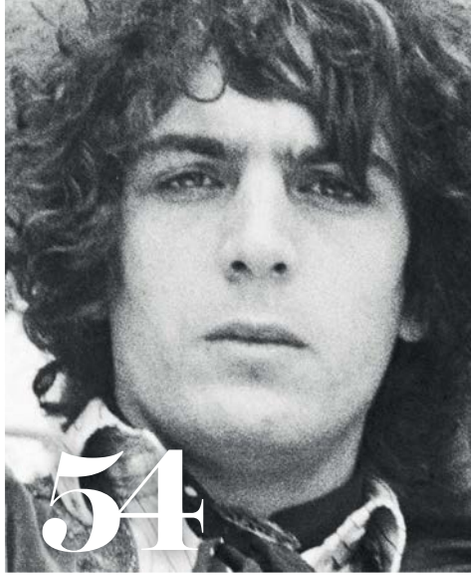
violator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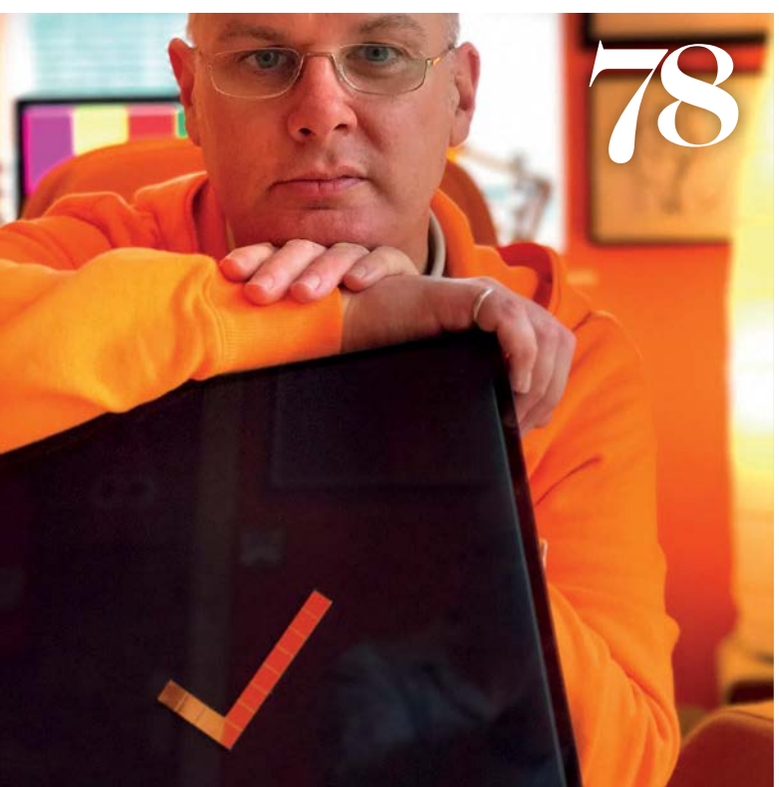
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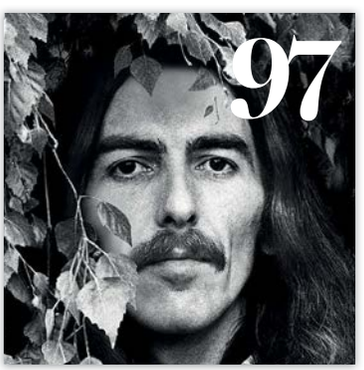
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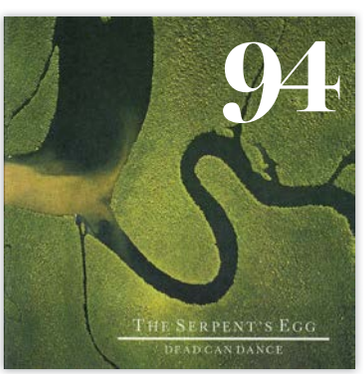
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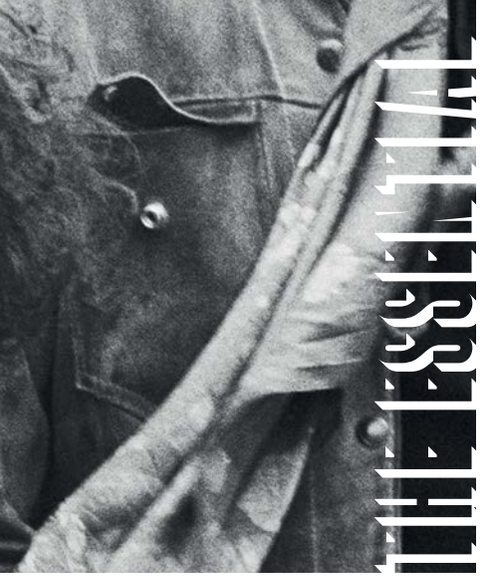
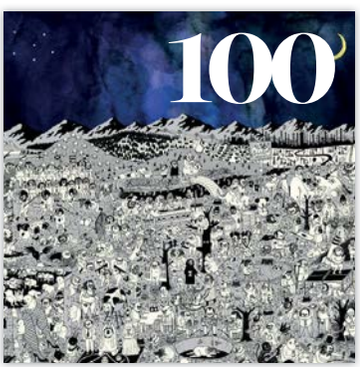
THE SERPENT'S EGG
DEAD CAN DANCE





LONG LIVE VINYL

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LONG LIVE VINYL

The *Long Live Vinyl* massive and their guilty pleasures...

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Glad It's All Over

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Roachford
Cuddly Toy

Founder & Editor-at-Large
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Various Artists *Easy Listening*

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Acker Bilk, His Clarinet & Strings
Theme From The Incredible Hulk

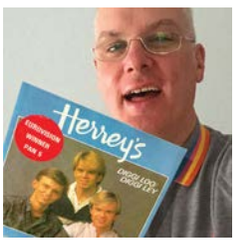
And this issue's contributors...

*1 "Co-written by my production hero Tony Mansfield, this is the best anti-war song ever made and on a loop at 11pm around my house every night."

*2 "My go-to, car-karaoke track. I can give Alan Partridge a good run for his money...!"

*3 "I've never felt guilty about my love of easy listening. It's pure pleasure all the way."

*4 "*You won't like me when I'm angry…*" Aged three, I wanted to be the Hulk – I still do!"



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Rat Rapping

*5 "Too many people are afraid to admit they enjoy Eurovision – I'm not. Check out the Youtube video and their glorious golden boots!"

*6 "One of those melodies that, once lodged in my brain, is immovable until I listen to the whole thing."

*7 "It's one of the best FA Cup Final songs ever. Spurs lost though, naturally..."

*8 "For a long time, I was scared to admit I loved this slice of epic 80s pop. Well maybe I was afraid before, but I'm not afraid – anymore..."

*9 "A wedding dancefloor classic that gets the toe tapping. Do I feel guilty for liking it? No."

*10 "'Guilty pleasure' is a tag that could refer to much of my collection. This is a 1983 gem!"

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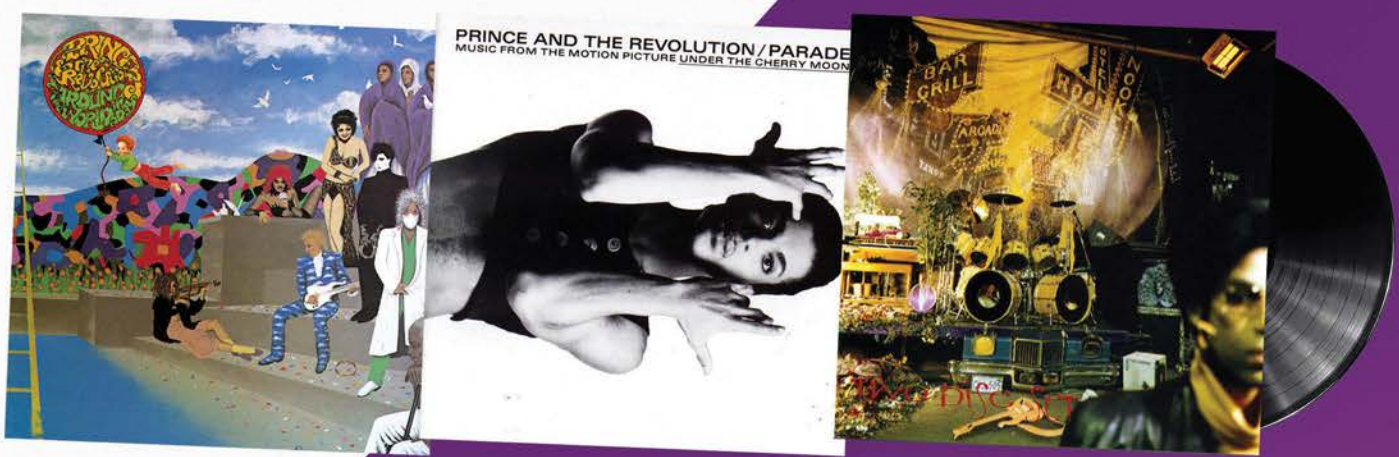
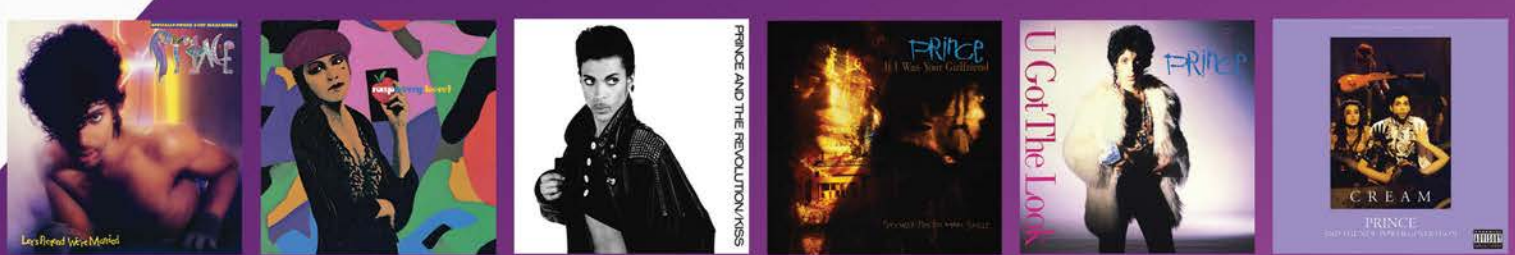
Prince

BACK ON WAX



"AROUND THE WORLD," "PARADE" & "SIGN 'O' THE TIMES"

AND THE CLASSIC SINGLES



"LET'S PRETEND WE'RE MARRIED," "RASPBERRY BERET," "KISS," "IF I WAS YOUR GIRLFRIEND," "U GOT THE LOOK" & "CREAM"

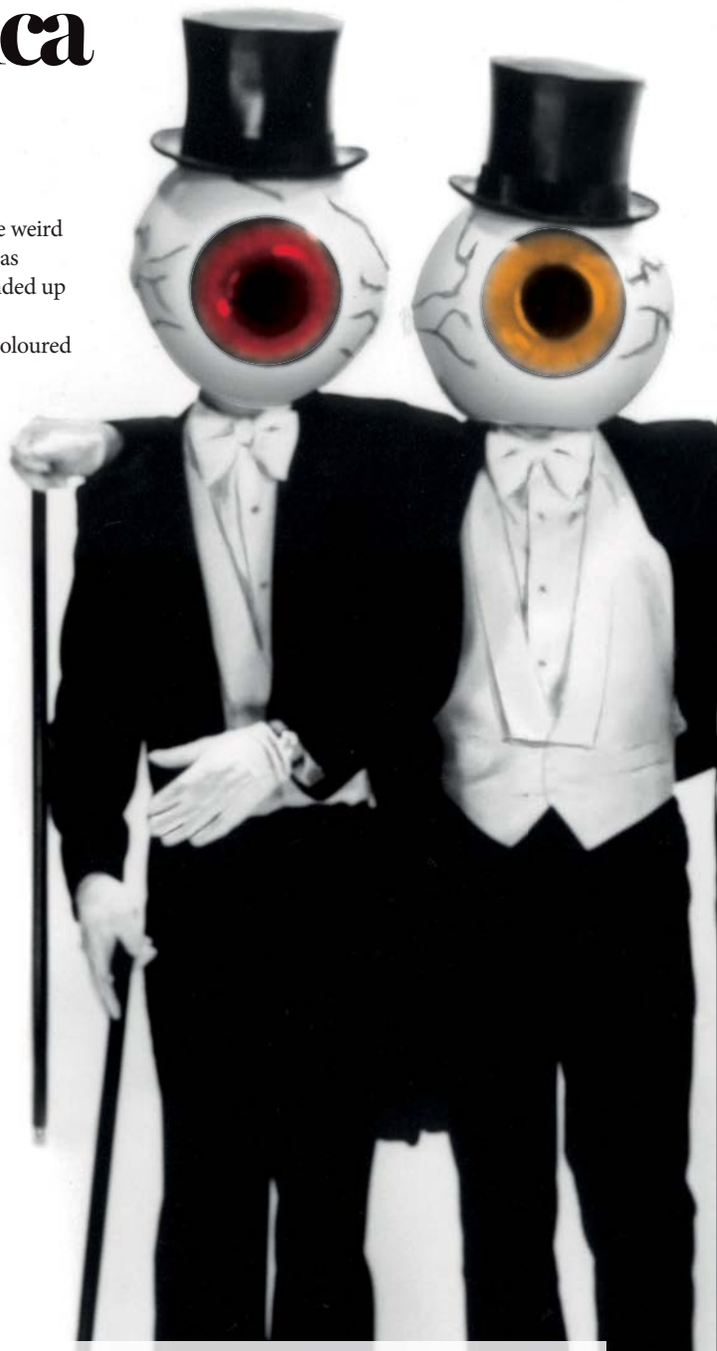
OUT NOW

WB RECORDS

amazon

Pioneers of Electronica

Presenting the first-ever Long Live Vinyl flexi disc – celebrating some true pioneers of electronic music



First appearing in the early Sixties, flexi discs have been the format of choice for some weird and wonderful recordings. Perhaps none more so than The Beatles' annual Christmas releases, from 1963 to 1969. Starting off as a simple 'thank you' to their fans, they ended up using their flexis as an outlet for their wackiest adventures in studio collage.

In the early Eighties, *Flexipop* magazine arrived. A monthly print magazine with a free coloured flexi on the cover every issue, it managed to bag exclusive tracks from all the stars of the day including The Jam, Depeche Mode and Adam And The Ants, who re-recorded Village People's *Y.M.C.A.* as *A.N.T.S.* for their *Flexipop* appearance.

There's only room for two tracks, of course, but we've bagged a couple of special works from a pair of electronic pioneers. We consciously selected artists who not only were there at the beginning and inspired a generation, but who are still active today releasing some of their finest work. Impossible to choose who should go on the B-side, we've made it a double A-side with Thomas Leer on the A, and The Residents on the AA.

Produced in collaboration with the Cherry Red label, we believe this is Thomas Leer's first-ever appearance on flexidisc but, for The Residents, it's the latest in a sequence of such releases, dating back to *Meet The Residents* on their own Ralph Records in 1974. ●

A

THOMAS LEER *Tight As A Drum*

In 1979, Thomas Leer virtually invented bedroom DIY electronica, recording *Private Plane* and for 7" his own Oblique label. He started to plot the blueprint for everything from electro-pop to EDM with a mix of tape loops, hushed vocals and early synths. "Thomas was a huge influence on me," Matt Johnson of The The later recalled. "The fact it was just one guy in his bedroom doing the entire thing made a massive, massive impact on me. He was years ahead of his time and actually inspired me to create The The, really. Thomas later told me the reason his vocals were so whispered on that song is because his girlfriend was asleep in their bedsit while he did it!"

Leer followed *Private Plane* with another influential release: the industrial/ambient headcharge of *The Bridge* in collaboration with Robert Rental. It was released on Throbbing Gristle's own label.

With 1981's *4 Movements* album – from which our flexi track is taken – he mapped out a gloriously low-tech, soulful alternative to the sterile synth-pop scene of the time.

This is its first vinyl repress since then, while it also recently made an appearance – alongside Blancmange, The Human League and OMD – on Cherry Red's *Close To The Noise Floor* four-CD compilation, subtitled *Formative UK Electronica 1975-1984.*

further listening THOMAS LEER

FROM SCI-FI TO BARFLY
FUTURE HISTORIC, 2007

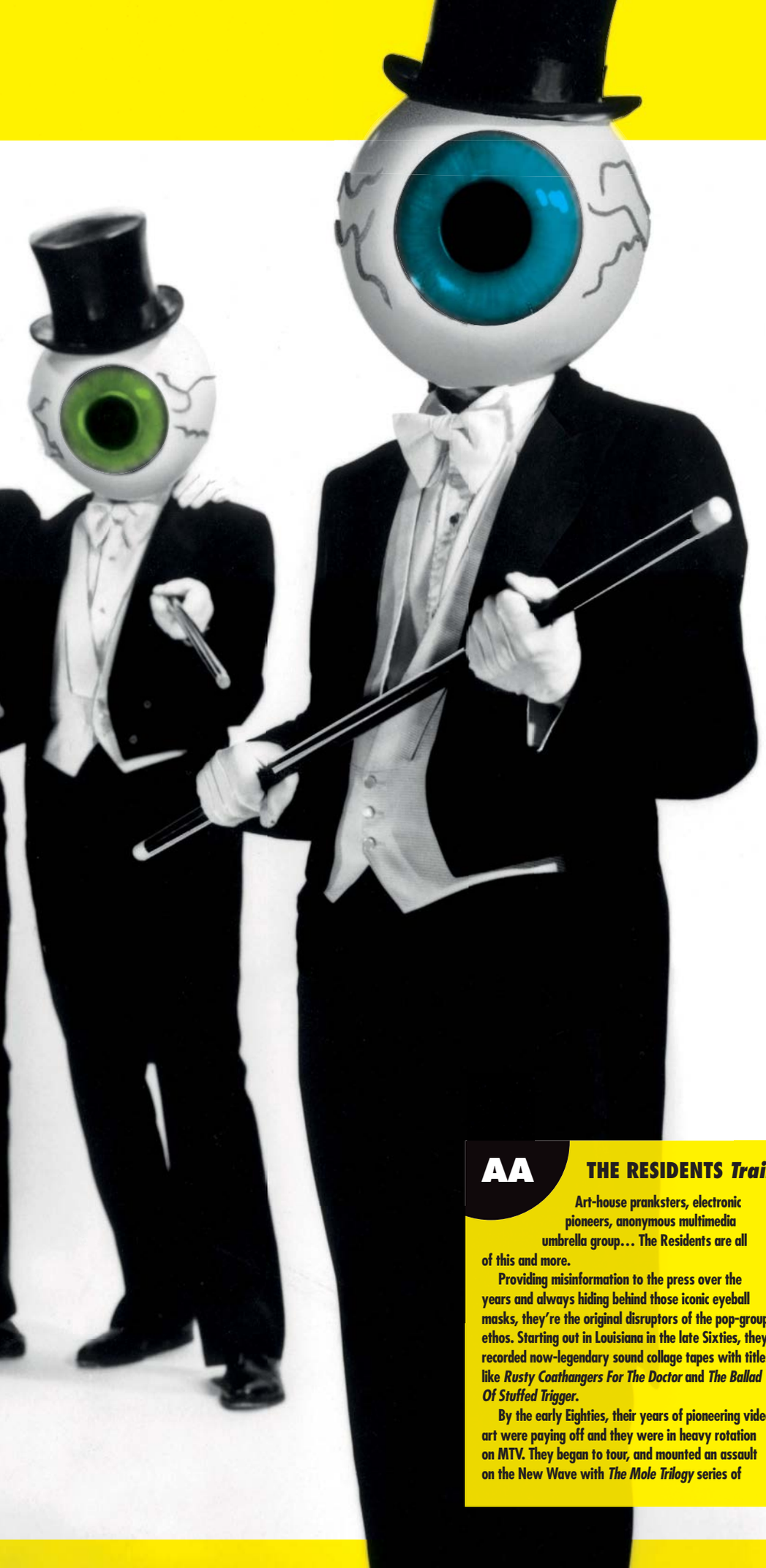
Perhaps his most accomplished work, the electronics trade places with acoustic guitars and strings for an album with many heart-wrenching ballads, shot through with a dark, Lynchian vision.

PARTS OF A GREATER HOLE
KARVAVENA, 2005

Inspired by the Future Sound Of London, Thomas detours into a world of cut-and-paste beats for an album that many reviewers thought had come from the latest scenesters of the day.

1979
KLANGGALERIE, 2017

Bringing everything full circle, Thomas unearthed all of his first recordings from 1979 and uploaded them to Bandcamp; they were then picked up for a physical release by Austrian art-house label Klanggalerie.

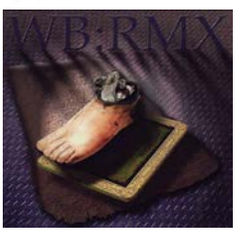


further listening
THE RESIDENTS

THE BUNNY BOY
SANTA DOG, 2008

With a hint of Donnie Darko, and pre-dating the Vlogger phenomenon, this has 19 tracks about "obsession, insanity and the coming Apocalypse".

WB: RMX
CRYPTIC CORPORATION, 2004



Alarmed to hear that their first demo tape (the rejected, so-called Warner Bros. Album) was on P2P sites, the group remixed half the tracks and issued them officially.

THE CENSUS TAKER
EPISODE, 1985

A soundtrack to the schlock murder movie of the same name, the group reworked old tunes and unveiled new tracks *Hellno* and *Where Is She* for a red-vinyl release.

AA THE RESIDENTS *Train Vs Elephant*

Art-house pranksters, electronic pioneers, anonymous multimedia umbrella group… The Residents are all of this and more.

Providing misinformation to the press over the years and always hiding behind those iconic eyeball masks, they're the original disruptors of the pop-group ethos. Starting out in Louisiana in the late Sixties, they recorded now-legendary sound collage tapes with titles like *Rusty Coathangers For The Doctor* and *The Ballad Of Stuffed Trigger*.

By the early Eighties, their years of pioneering video art were paying off and they were in heavy rotation on MTV. They began to tour, and mounted an assault on the New Wave with *The Mole Trilogy* series of concept albums: 1981's *Mark The Mole*, 1982's *The Tunes Of Two Cities* and 1985's *The Big Bubble* billed, characteristically, as Part Four of the *Mole* Trilogy.

Like Thomas Leer, save for the media hiatus or mysterious disappearance, The Residents have never stopped pushing forward the boundaries of art-pop, alt.rock, electronica or a myriad of other genres and sub-genres. Released this month, their latest album is *The Ghost Of Hope*, which juxtaposes extracts of 19th-century news articles on the dangers of train travel with cut-and-paste music, sound effects and readings recreating the horrific incidents that inspired them. The album's penultimate track, *Train Vs. Elephant* and Thomas Leer's *Tight As A Drum* both appear courtesy of Cherry Red Records.

On the record

BLUE ARRIVAL...

Scottish pop favourites **Deacon Blue** return with *Live At The Glasgow Barrowlands* double LP

Deacon Blue's new *Live At The Glasgow Barrowlands* album has just arrived on CD, DVD, Blu-Ray and vinyl. But it's on the double LP that the group believe the band can be heard at their best.

"We were limited to 80 minutes for the vinyl version," singer Ricky Ross told *Long Live Vinyl*, "which meant some serious editing, as the show was nearly two-and-a-half-hours long. We didn't do any overdubs for the release; what you hear is exactly as it was on the night, so this edit meant I could choose the songs that went really well and leave the full show to the digital formats. The vinyl, then, shows the band at its best."

The concert itself was recorded on 4 December 2016 on the last night of the group's *Believers* tour, coming off the back of the album of the same name, the 30th anniversary of their classic breakthrough *Raintown* and returning the group to a venue they last played in 1994.

As for the format itself? "It's always a delight to see your music on vinyl," Ricky told us. "It's how I grew up listening to music and the fact that it's come back now is testament to the format. It's tangible, you have to hold it, take care of it, you can study the artwork, find out who worked on the record. This release looks beautiful: a live album released as a gatefold double vinyl in 2017. Who'd have thought?"

Simon Murphy

VINYL RECKONING
This second issue of *Long Live Vinyl* may be hitting the streets in April, but we promise you this story is not an April Fool. The record label And Vinyly offers to press the ashes of your deceased loved one – human or pet – into vinyl. For £3,000, they'll spread and embed the ashes into 30 copies of a disc which will also carry any audio you supply (as long as you control the copyright).

"Live on from beyond the groove," is the company's motto and you can travel the world in the afterlife, too, as it also offers distribution of your finished record to stores around Europe.

Naked Ambition

Transvision Vamp starlet turned alt.rock diva Wendy James has come up with a unique twist on the picture-disc format for her new album, *The Price of The Ticket*. "I didn't particularly want to scrawl onto the naked vinyl (to autograph and personalise copies)," she told *Long Live Vinyl*. "So I got to thinking about how a picture disc was manufactured. In other words, how a photo is sandwiched and pressed between two slices of clear vinyl. I realised the pressing plant can send me over all the pictures and I can sign them. And the designer can add a little rectangle of plain white, so I can personally number each edition, making it a bona-fide collector's item. Similar in concept to when an artist prints a numbered amount of signed editions of a painting or drawing. Wonderful!"

Wendy cites The Stooges, MC5, The Shangri-Las and Martha And The Vandellas as influences on this new LP, which features Patti Smith's guitarist Lenny Kaye, a neighbour of Wendy's since she relocated to New York almost 15 years ago. "We hit it off immediately," she reports, "both citing a similar outlook on life, a similar connection to music and music styles and generally, we dug each other. So Lenny came on board for the whole album and he is perfect. The most perfect guitarist I have ever come across for me and my taste, and my personality." The disc is being crowdfunded at www.pledgemusic.com/projects/wendyjames.

SPIN ME RIGHT ROUND
The latest, innovative alternative to the traditional turntable has arrived. The LOVE turntable flips the idea of playing a record on its head by placing the vinyl flat on a stationary surface, and then loading a special device on top which rotates, sending the music back from its needle to a nearby Bluetooth speaker. And, adding CD-like controls, it comes with an app that allows you to forward, rewind and skip from track to track.

PLANE GROOVY FLUIDS

RECORD LABEL RELEASES BESPOKE CLEANER TO BATHE YOUR VINYL

Boutique label Plane Groovy, whose artist roster includes Curved Air and Asia's Geoff Downes, has created their own vinyl-cleaning fluid.

"My record collection runs to around 18,000 albums and 6,000 singles and I need to keep åthe playing surfaces scrupulously clean, because I sometimes use an ELP-1 Laser Turntable," explains Plane Groovy's MD-turned-chemist Chris Topham.

"The advantage of that deck is that there's no wear to records whatsoever, but the disadvantage is that any specks of dust or dirt in the record grooves sound like a scratch when picked up by the laser beam."

Plane Groovy makes up the fluid in both 500cl and one-litre bottles, the latter cleaning "300 to 600 LPs… It also works particularly well with a manual/vertical rotating-type record cleaner, where the record is rotated in a small bath of fluid."

Quote of the month

Quote of the month is from turntable manufacturer Wilson Benesch, whose latest deck we test drive this issue. "A turntable," they say, distilling the deck to its simplest, scientific essence, "is purely a system of measurement, designed to allow a 0.000001mm cantilever tip to trace a 0.05mm groove in a piece of vinyl. By considering the microscopic level… what appears a simple design is in fact a complex and highly engineered analogue replay system."

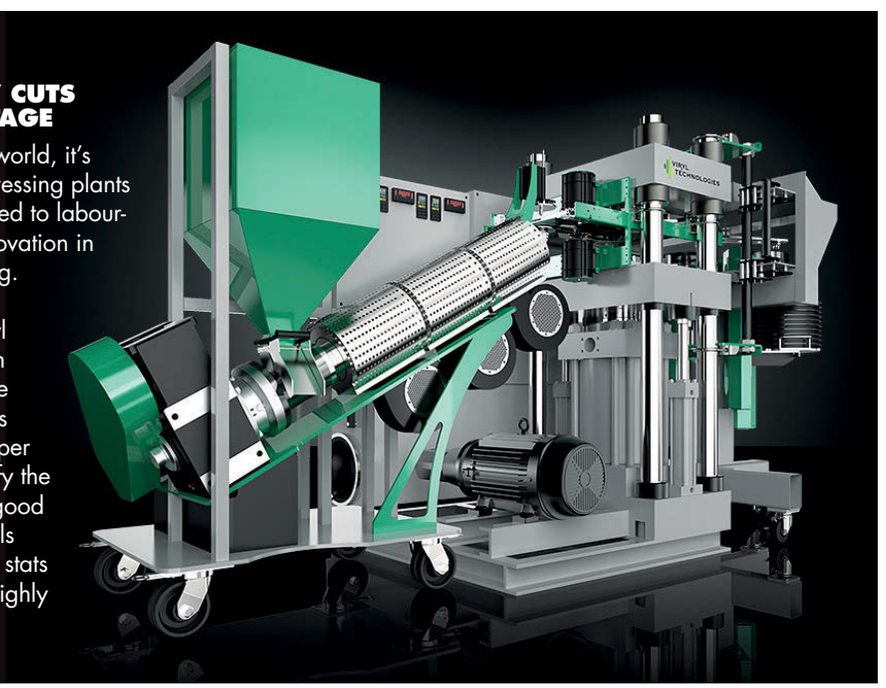
SHOPPING (PLAY)LIST
Some among us tend to choose headphones with our eyes. But, really, of course, your ears should choose your cans. That's the thinking of Danish hardware company AIAIAI which, having launched at the TMA-2 modular headphone series in 2015, has now unveiled an online system that can recommend the most appropriate modules – speakers, ear pads, cables and so on – based on analysis of your Spotify account's Discover Weekly data. In other words, your preferred music in terms of genre, era and tempo. It's yet to recommend modules for pure vinyl listeners. But if you playlist all your new purchases to avoid breaking the shrinkwrap, then that's a start.

MAKE A GOOD IMPRESSION

NEW VINYL-PRESSING TECHNOLOGY CUTS PRESSING TIME AND REDUCES WASTAGE

With fewer than 50 vinyl-pressing plants in the world, it's fair to say while vinyl is making a comeback, pressing plants are not. These archaic factories remained chained to labour-intensive, post-war machinery and a lack of innovation in what should be the coolest field of manufacturing.

All this is set to change, with the arrival of the Warm Tone press from Canadian company Viryl Technologies. It claims to cut pressing time down to an average of 20 seconds per disc, versus the traditional 35 seconds. More impressively, it cuts wastage down from an industry average of 40 per cent to just one per cent. All of which helps justify the Warm Tone's $195,000 price tag. But what is good news for pressing plant owners and record labels may be bad news for collectors. Those wastage stats may well mean it's time to say goodbye to the highly valuable market for misprints and mis-pressings.



UNDER THE HAMMER

Omega Auctions (www.omegaauctions.co.uk) reveals some of its recent big vinyl sellers and the stories behind them…

THE BEATLES
THE WHITE ALBUM NUMBER 0000079

A very low-numbered original UK mono copy of the 'White Album' – bought on the day of release from Oxford Street, London. It was sold with poster (with some repair work), photos, spacer and original black inners. The records were in very good condition, with numerous surface marks, but no heavy scratches. The laminated sleeve was in clean and excellent condition with only a few, very light creases.

Sold for **£2,900**

DAVID BOWIE
LOW ACETATE

A never-before-seen acetate of Bowie's 1977 album, with a pre-release acetate called *New Music: Night And Day*. The record contained three tracks with different over/under dubs, also recorded onto a CD included as part of the lot. It came with paper labels with red RCA logos and black text with 'Record Division London England'. The acetate was in excellent condition with minor marks.

Sold for **£5,070**

SPIROGYRA
BELLS, BOOTS AND SHAMBLES

The simply incredible third album from the Lancashire group, issued on Polydor in 1973 (2310-246). The record was in outstanding archive condition with virtually no sign of having been played. The matte sleeve was in excellent condition, with just one or two very minor creases and some minor shelfwear – you'd be extremely unlikely to find an example in better condition.

Sold for **£1,150**

Space – the vinyl frontier

Backing for NASA, King Tubby and Fonda 500's vinyl releases in our crowdfunding roundup

This month sees Ozma Records start shipping a special 40th anniversary edition of one of the most historic platters ever pressed: NASA's *Voyager Golden Record*, which was sent into space in 1977, to "introduce our civilisation to extraterrestrials who might encounter the probes, perhaps billions of years from now". Its Kickstarter campaign achieved more than 10,000 backers, who between them pledged $1,363,037.

Other crowdfunded releases currently looking for investment include a vinyl release of It's Immaterial's legendary third album *House For Sale* and a 40th anniversary edition of the *King Tubby Meets Rockers Uptown* LP, both of which are up on PledgeMusic.

Back on Kickstarter, Fonda 500 are looking for investors for a vinyl release of their seventh album, and first for almost nine years. And there's nothing like crowdfunding to focus the artistic temperament. "We love the sound of deadlines whizzing past," says Nicholas from Fonda 500. "However, this time we're going for it."

Liverpool indie-popsters It's Immaterial are attempting to drive investment for a vinyl release of their third album, 1992's *House For Sale*

Wild Willy's Wild Wood

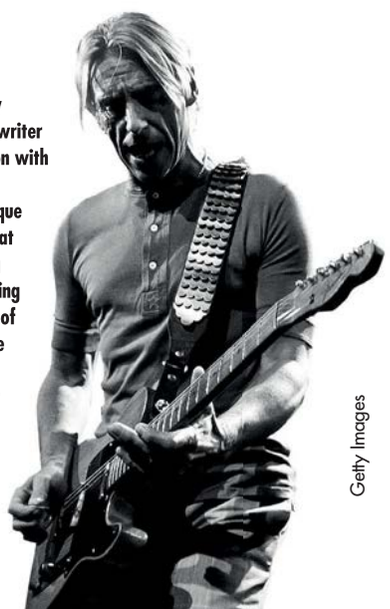
With a myriad of special vinyl formats appearing for Record Store Day, Wild Willy Barrett has upped the ante by abandoning vinyl altogether for a special pressing of an album in, believe it or not, wood. An erstwhile collaborator of John Otway, Wild Willy's discography includes the mythical *The Contemporary Folk Guitar* album which also featured Bert Jansch, John Renbourn and Ralph McTell. He's toured with The Police and Madness, and was once in the running as Brian Jones' replacement in The Rolling Stones.

Back in 1987, Wild Willy released the album *Organic Bondage* in a wooden sleeve. With a 180-gram vinyl reissue, planned for RSD, of his album *A Mange Tout Far* with grunge-folk collective Wild Willy Barrett's French Connection, he decided to revisit the idea and create not only a wooden sleeve but also to expand by adding a second – wooden – disc.

You can only imagine how it might sound, of course, as the disc has no grooves and there's no download code either. "*Organic Bondage* has become the stuff of legend for Wild Willy fans," his label StirFry told us, "yet he has resisted the temptation to make another wooden sleeve until this 30th anniversary of the original. In addition, 2017 is the fifth year of French Connection as a band (and the fifth anniversary is the 'wood anniversary') so it seemed the time was right for Willy to go back into his workshop and get creative!"

JAMMING WITH WELLER

"Paul would constantly send through any new ideas, demos or recordings," screenwriter Johnny Harris explains of his collaboration with Paul Weller for the Jawbone soundtrack, released this month. "And what was unique and beautiful about this approach was that his new compositions were now inspiring and influencing the story as I was rewriting it. I'd also send Paul through new drafts of the script, or any new ideas as they were forming along the way, and a beautifully collaborative process evolved." Read our review on page 102.



Getty Images

long live vinyl

the 991.com team have been buying and selling vinyl for over 30 years.

we are always looking for mint condition vinyl, LPs, EPs and 45s plus CDs and pop music memorabilia

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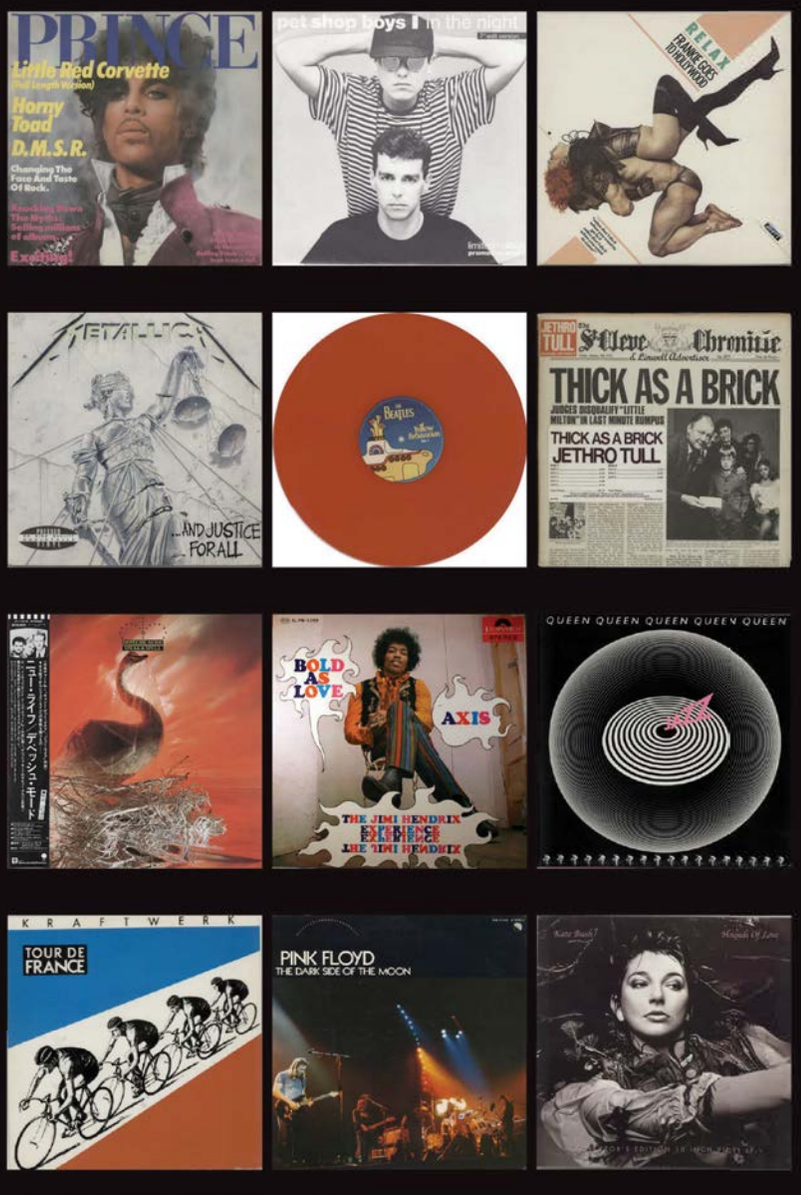

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CRATE DIGGING WITH... Goldfrapp

Goldfrapp's first album in four years, *Silver Eye*, is out this month on Mute Records. It's a return to the luxurious electro-pulse of 2003's *Black Cherry*, but with a contemporary sheen – having been mixed by David Wrench (The xx, FKA Twigs). Goldfrapp's Will Gregory invited *Long Live Vinyl* for a root through his collection

EARTH WIND AND FIRE
I AM

"Groovy and beautiful sounding… Layers of instruments, voices, drums, percussion and synths, in some mercurial combination that sounds perfect. How did they do this just with 24-track tape?"

THE BEATLES
SGT. PEPPER'S LONELY HEARTS CLUB BAND

"It's mono and yet it still sounds brilliant."

RAINBOW IN CURVED AIR
TERRY RILEY

"Electric organs getting used to make visionary early systems-music manifesto… Western art music has never sounded less western. A schism in contemporary music opened up right here."

WATERMELON MAN
HERBIE HANCOCK

"You are in the hands of the best musicians in the world, just making it sound easy."

WALTER CARLOS
SWITCHED-ON BACH

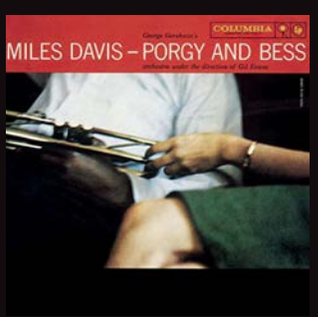
"I've played this to death, especially the weird middle Brandenburg movement."

HUNKY DORY
DAVID BOWIE

"Bowie's youthful collection of genius songs. I think he never bettered this. And, to my youthful snobby taste, this was the first pop music since The Beatles to stand alongside them."

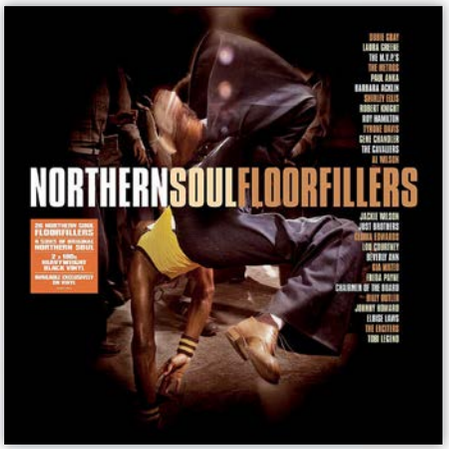
THE UMBRELLAS OF CHERBOURG SOUNDTRACK
MICHEL LEGRAND

"Is it jazz, easy listening, musical theatre, or classical pastiche? It's certainly OTT, and from some kind of Gallic kitsch planet that nevertheless can make you well up against your will."



PORGY & BESS
MILES DAVIS

"Gil Evans' arrangements defined the concept of cool, and made it leap out the speakers in 3D."



ALL KILLER FLOOR FILLER

Demon Records' new *Northern Soul Floor Fillers* is reviewed this issue and includes the audio of many a high-value 7". In fact, we've calculated that if you were to buy each of the singles that the compilation features in its original form, you'd have little change out of £1,500. Lou Courtney's *Tryin' To Find My Woman*, for example, has sold for over £100, and The Cavaliers' *Hold On To My Baby*, an RCA Victor single from 1966, often goes for around £150. Beverly Ann's 1967 RCA single *He's Coming Home* can also reach the £100 mark in mint condition and even Laura Greene's *Moonlight Music And You*, from the same year, regularly sells for £20. So if you want to hear some very high-value singles – try before you buy – this is the perfect sampler.

Vinylize refashions used vinyl into these limited-edition glasses, and has already garnered a celebrity muso customer base

Specs Appeal

An eye-wear brand might not be the first company you think of when it comes to Record Store Day sponsors. But Vinylize, a fashion house in Budapest, has an affinity with vinyl that runs deep.

The company refashions vinyl records into limited-edition spectacles, with customers including Mick Fleetwood, Tiësto and Fred Durst. They've redesigned the opticians' Snellen eyechart using turntable graphics to make the official 2017 RSD poster. Vinylize's next project is The Vinyl Exchange, a recycling scheme for unwanted records that saves them going into landfill, and also offers some money back in exchange. "We recycle about three metric tons of vinyl every year," says Vinylize founder Zachary Tipton. "Now, from our website, we can quote a value for the vinyl you wish to recycle."

LONG LIVE STREAMING

We love vinyl, but we have to admit it's not the easiest way to listen to music when you're in the car, or on the Tube. So *Long Live Vinyl* is now on Spotify, so you can listen to the key tracks from all of our features each issue and try before you buy with excerpts from our main album reviews. It's not exactly analogue, but there is something to be said for listening to some classic Yes tracks on your headphones while reading through our most popular feature from Issue One, the interview and gallery of Yes artist Roger Dean.

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#VINYL OF THE DAY...

Singapore-based blog #vinyloftheday is set for launch, aiming to create a social marketplace for vinyl lovers

Mashing up Discogs, eBay and Instagram is a new app from Singapore-based blog #vinyloftheday. Founded in 2013 by DJ/musician Kurt Loy, formerly of streaming service Rdio, it's "on a mission to become the most sociable marketplace for vinyl collectors and music lovers," he tells *Long Live Vinyl*.

"We realised Discogs has some flaws and many of our community members and music fans felt that there's a need for an alternate platform that could resolve some of the issues they faced while using the site," Kurt explains. "Having said that, we want to make it clear that we are not competing with Discogs; in fact, we are always looking up to them and would love to collaborate with them someday to bring this whole vinyl collecting culture to the next level." With a focus on mobile, Instagram-style galleries, 'wants' lists and a space for hardware and accessories, it's available for beta test now from cratedig.us/app.

Like everywhere else, Singapore is seeing a rebirth of vinyl and record stores. "The vinyl scene in this part of the world was quite slow, with only a handful of record stores in South East Asia when we started in 2013," Kurt reports. "Japan, of course, remains the number-one country in Asia for vinyl, but there are now about 37 record stores in the tiny city of Singapore alone, with neighbouring countries such as Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand also seeing new stores popping up recently."

Currently in beta testing, #vinyloftheday is a new app which aims to provide a forum and marketplace for vinyl collectors and enthusiasts

WE'RE ON THE ROAD
***Long Live Vinyl* has hit the road, appearing at two events already this year. In January, we sponsored the Best Art Vinyl awards, the annual prize-giving for excellence in the art of sleeve design. From a shortlist of 50 covers, public votes were counted and the winner, announced at a special exhibition at Belgravia's Hari Hotel, was Matthew Cooper for The Last Shadow Puppets' *Everything You've Come To Expect*. In March, we headed up North for the "dedicated analogue music event" that is Styl:us and two days of turntables, hi-fi, and workshops at the Macdonald Manchester Hotel.**

THE DEVIL HAS ALL THE BEST TUNES
Demon is launching its This Is Vinyl store. The UK-only online shop features albums and picture discs from £7.99. *this-is-vinyl.myshopify.com*

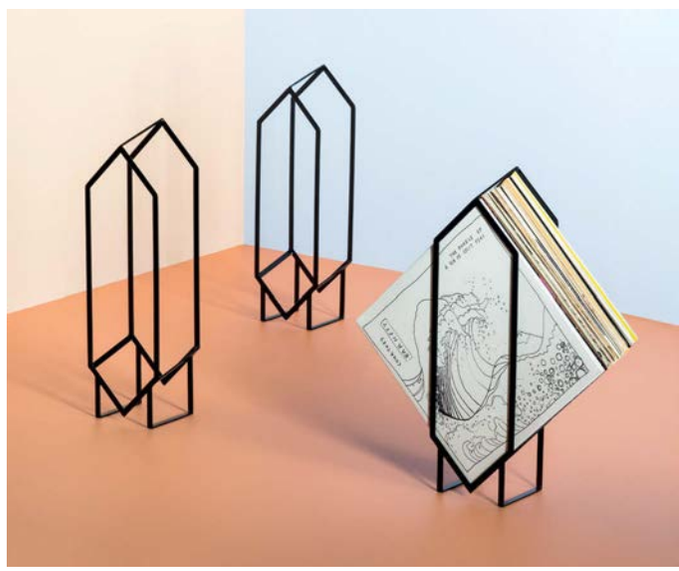
They Wanna Jex You Up

Holding up to 20 LPs, The Jex is a light, innovative new vinyl rack from a Melbourne design house called Idle Hands. Standing almost half a metre high, it's an elongated hexagonal prism (if our maths lesson memories are to be trusted) in either black or white painted metal.

In other words, fill it with records and your collection will look very cool indeed. Empty it out, and you still have a work of art. It's lightweight, too: at 0.7kg per unit, it allows you to get your records off the floor and displayed on a shelf.

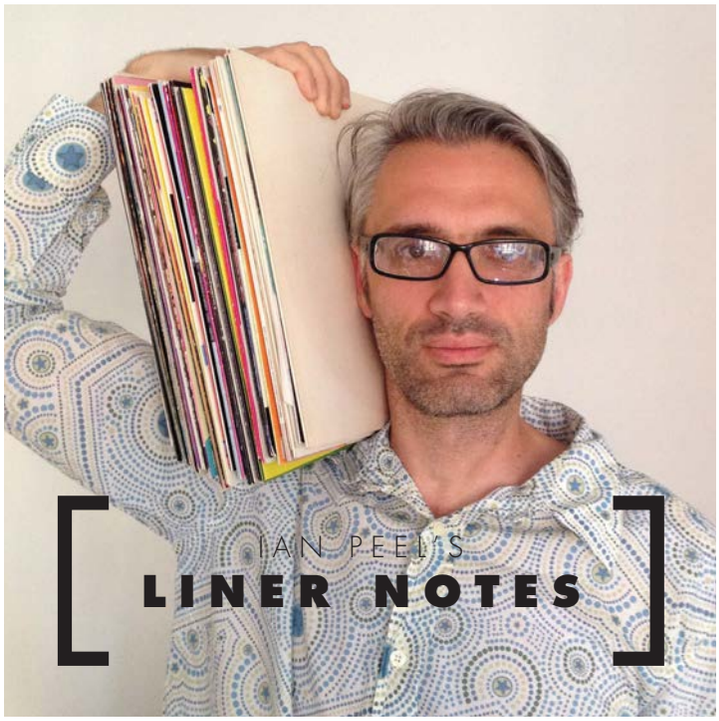
"The design came about when I changed from collecting CDs to vinyl," Idle Hands' Kieran Meegan tells *Long Live Vinyl*. "I realised pretty quickly that half the pleasure of owning vinyl over CDs was the cover art, so that needed to be front and centre in my lounge room. It just so happened that at the same time, I was starting a business making and designing furniture and I had been coming up with various ideas for potential products.

"The Jex was one of the very first. It took a couple of awful prototypes, but eventually, we had something that not only did I need, but looked good, too!"



And what's he currently playing and displaying? "Currently at the front of my two Jexes are The Groundhogs' *Hogwash* and the reissue of Pentagram's *First Daze Her*... We're thinking of expanding on the Jex idea with a deeper version and one you could attach to your wall, plus a design for a very simple 'now playing' stand.

"We're getting customers from all over the world, which is awesome, because I've personally made every single Jex out there at the moment, so my handiwork is now in living rooms across the globe!"



IAN PEEL'S
LINER NOTES

This issue's Liner Notes is about, to borrow the title of a David Sylvian compilation, *Everything And Nothing*. It is, as Alison Moyet once sang, *Invisible*. Because this issue's Liner Notes is about the hole in the middle of a vinyl record

It may exist simply as a functional part of playing a disc, but over the years, the hole in the middle of a record has been put to far more creative uses than just being that spot that hooks your record onto your turntable. For example, when Peter Gabriel left Genesis he wanted to leave behind his prog-rock personas, acknowledge his wild punk-rock energy and set out his stall as an everyman of musical genre-hopping.

So he followed up *Solsbury Hill* in 1977 with the howling *Modern Love*, the closest he ever came to punk and – on the single's labels – posed naked, using the centre hole to censor his privates.

It's surprising this visual gag hasn't been done more often. In fact, the only other example I've seen is a female version. New York DJ and DFAs collaborator Tim Sweeney released a 12" picture disc in 2009, *Stop Sitting Around*, with a female model relaxing on the B-side and the centre hole adding a little bit of censorship. He used the hole on the A-side, too, between the lips of a herb-smoking, exhaling mouth.

Frankie Goes To Hollywood took the role of the hole one stage further and made it a political statement. The whole essence of *Two Tribes*, their second No. 1 in 1984, was the 'superpowers wrestling match', from the lyrics to Godley & Creme's award-winning video. The holes on their vinyl labels played a role, too, being strategically placed to act as bulletholes –through the forehead of Vladimir Lenin on the A-side, and one targetting Ronald Reagan on the B-side.

Frankie Goes To Hollywood's Two Tribes vinyl took the role of the hole one stage further and made it a political statement

All of these records just have one hole through the centre. But why stop there? In 2015, electronic experimentalist Son Lux – who's released many a vinyl limited edition, including black/clear combinations – devised a one-off run of 89 copies of Joyful Noise Records' EP, *Lanterns: Wicks*.

The four-track 10" was a hand-made lathe-cut edition and, on account of it being pressed with three sets of grooves, had three separate spindle holes. This was a logical follow-up to perhaps the most creative use of the centre hole of all, and certainly the most valuable on the collectors' market.

In 1981, sound artist Boyd Rice released the 17-track *Pagan Muzak* under his NON moniker and gave the listener two interpretations of each track. You could play back either the standard version using the centre hole, or you could opt for a completely different, elliptical listening experience by playing the record on its second, off-centre hole, each of which was hand-drilled by Rice himself.

It's impossible to pick up an original of *Pagan Muzak* for less than £100, though it was reissued by Mute offshoot, The Grey Area, in 1999, making it a little easier to find. But be warned, while the left-of-centre pop of Peter Gabriel's *Modern Love* and Frankie's *Two Tribes* might not be to your taste musically, the off-centre grooves of NON and Son Lux can put your tone arm and stylus in serious danger! ●

Getty Images

Incoming… RSD Latest

Those Record Store Day releases keep coming, even as we go to press. Look out for these special editions in the racks on the day…

This issue's Record Store Day special profiles a whole host of special editions that have been pressed up for this year's event. But news is still coming in on further releases as we go to press.

Bowie fans will undoubtedly be thrilled with a double LP of the hitherto-unreleased *Cracked Actor (Live In Los Angeles, 1974)*, which features Luther Vandross on backing vocals. There's also a repress of an untitled 1971 white-label promo, original catalogue number BOWPROMO. With unreleased mixes from the *Hunky Dory* era , it's had the other, unrelated tracks by Dana Gillespie removed and is now titled BOWPROMO1.

Madonna dusts off her 1985 Argentina-only 12" EP *Dance Mix* which includes *Chica Material (Material Girl)* and *Vacación (Holiday)*, while our favourite twist on coloured vinyl is a mix of all kinds of blue for Mayer Hawthorne's *Party Of One* EP.

Patti Smith reissues debut single *Hey Joe* (using the original 1974 picture sleeve), and the Grateful Dead's first ever concert outside of the USA – from 29 July 1966 in Vancouver, Canada – will be pressed up on double 180-gram using the original poster art of Bob Masse.

THE PIE'S IN THE POST

Southsea's record shop/café Pie & Vinyl has launched its own record club. For an annual fee, the shop will send out a hand-picked, mystery vinyl selection every three months. "We will also include a mystery Pie & Vinyl gift," they promise, "with every record you receive. It may even be a pie in the post." Membership is a steep £100, but entitles you to in-store discounts and entry to the shop's many in-store gigs. The premises have expanded, too, turning over the basement to Pie & Hi-Fi, providing reconditioned second-hand separates and repairs. "We offer a three-month warranty on all separates," they say, "and if you purchase a complete system, we'll also give you a £20 Pie & Vinyl gift voucher to get your record collection started."

WHY DOES MY VINYL SOUND SO GOOD?

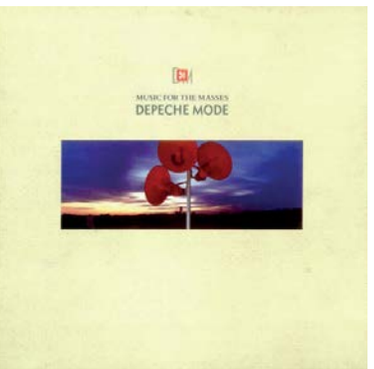
In a recent interview, **Moby** explained his theory about why, in a digital age, we still love the warmth of vinyl

Gathering what felt like the UN of electronic music, Jean-Michel Jarre recently sat down with Hans Zimmer, Moby and Little Boots to discuss his latest collaborations album, the Grammy-nominated *Electronica 1: The Time Machine*, for a Facebook webcast. And when the conversation turned to vinyl versus download, Moby nailed it. "The difference between the highest bit-rate digital and the analogue wave of vinyl," he mused, "is that, (with any) bit-rate, we always know that there are steps added in there. That's why I think, when people talk about the warmth of vinyl… we're looking for an emotional connection. There's just something – at least for me – there's something that's more authentic about vinyl."

Getty Images

YOUR MOST VALUABLE VINYL

Last issue, we looked at the world's most valuable vinyl, and it was a pretty rarefied collection. So we asked our friends at 991.com for a more realistic list of treasures – all values are for mint or near-mint condition copies



DEPECHE MODE
MUSIC FOR THE MASSES

A rare 1987 UK 10-track vinyl album from Basildon's finest world-conquering electronica act, pressed in small quantities on limited-edition clear vinyl release and complete with textured and embossed picture sleeve and illustrated lyric inner.

Value **£3,200**

PINK FLOYD
ATOM HEART MOTHER

A1970 UK first pressing five-track stereo vinyl LP with 'Gramophone Co. Ltd' perimeter text and no 'boxed' EMI logo on the labels. This first pressing is also the only issue to contain the looped 'dripping tap' at the end of *Morning Glory*.

Value **£3,250**

PET SHOP BOYS
DISCOGRAPHY

Rare UK 18-track double vinyl LP compilation from the 1990s. From an era when vinyl runs were very low and the CD was king. Complete with hype-stickered glossy picture sleeve with illustrated credit inners.

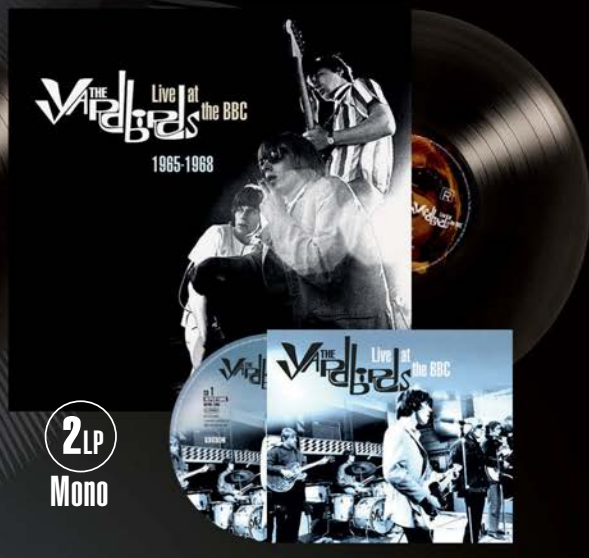
Value **£340**

THE CURE
KISS ME KISS ME KISS ME

Rare original 1987 UK 18-track vinyl double LP. This version is particularly sought after to collectors as it comes with an exclusive limited edition bonus six-track orange-vinyl 12" EP, which has its own printed, clear-PVC sleeve.

Value **£395**

Repertoire on vinyl classics repackaged



Graham Bond
Live at the BBC LP+CD

the Pretty Things
Live at the BBC LP+CD

Yardbirds
Live at the BBC LP+CD

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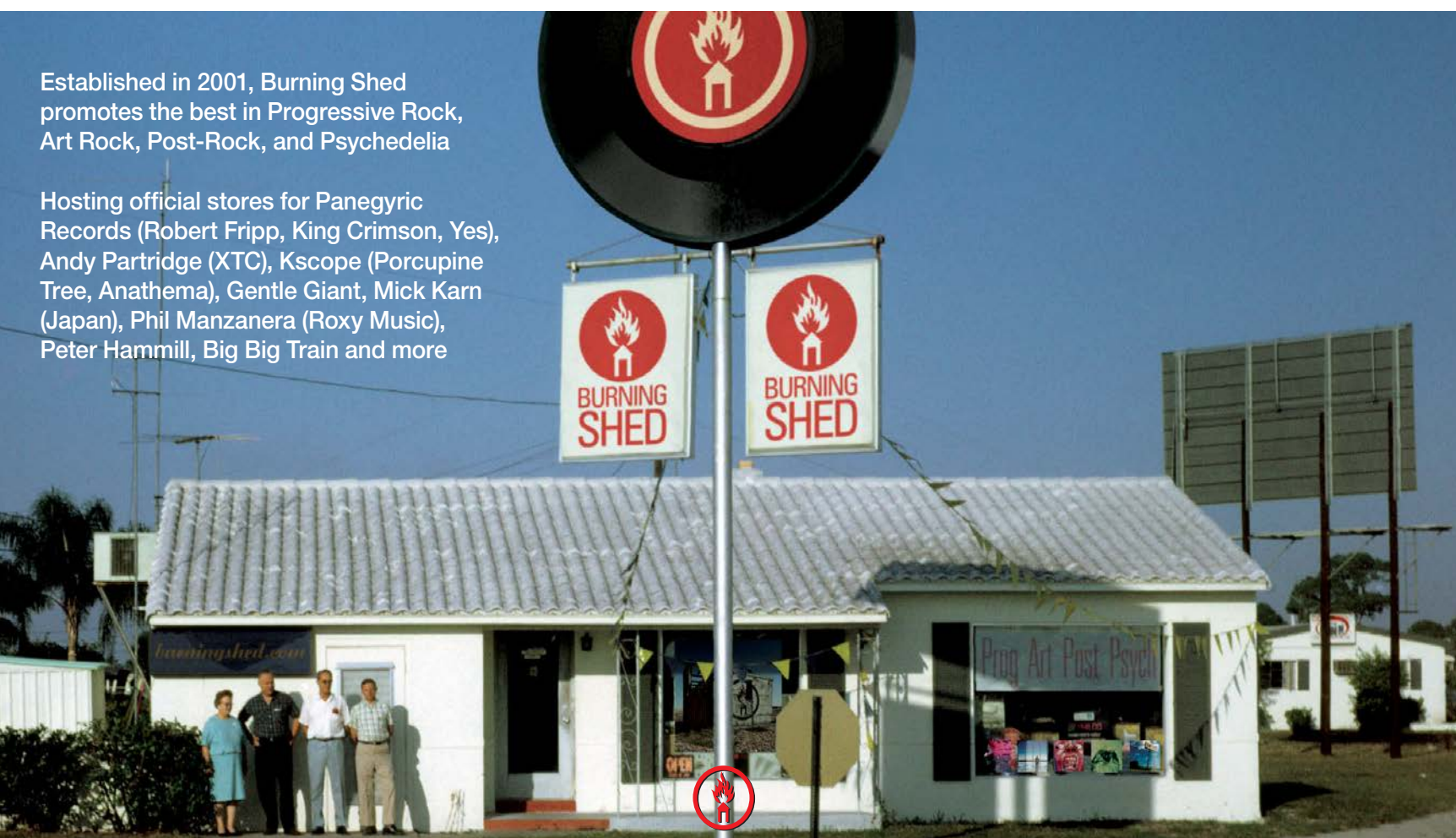

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10 YEARS

CELEBRATING THE INDIE RECORD STORE

22 APRIL 2017

STORE Crazy!

Record Store Day is finally here, and this year marks its 10th anniversary. Join us as Ian Peel dives deep into all areas of an event which should take much of the credit for the modern-day rebirth of vinyl...

VINYL REVIVAL

The Best of Record Store Day

Record Store Day has had negative press in the mass media – but step this way for the real story

Set your alarm clock. It's time to queue up in the wee small hours, ready to hit the indie stores and this year's Record Store Day. Over the coming pages, we raise a glass to toast the event's 10th anniversary. Plus, we crack open a whole extra crate to toast the massive impact RSD has made on the world of vinyl and how, without it, there would probably be no vinyl revival at all.

The mass media loves to run stories about RSD's unscrupulous eBay flippers, over-inflated prices for limited-edition releases, and major-label cash-ins. So we've travelled from London to Edinburgh to talk to the very shops this event was set up to support. At grassroots level, they have lots to say and some great ideas but, overall, see those national-press stories as nothing but hype.

Also, we curate a hand-picked collection of classic Record Store Day releases. Choosing from across the last 10 years, there's rock, pop, jazz, soundtracks, and even classic comedy in some breathtaking formats, from etched 7"s to glow-in-the-dark 12"s. None of these releases would have existed without this event and, when put together, make a small but perfectly formed – and eminently enviable – record collection.

We've also got all of this year's exclusive releases covered, building a shopping list of must-have vinyl. We've spotlighted six of the best, from *Doctor Who* to The Durutti Column, and end with a roundup of another dozen – from Marianne Faithfull to *Fawlty Towers* – that need to be on your radar...

2017 Shopping List

ART OF NOISE

We're not sure of the logic behind releasing two Art Of Noise RSD releases of the same song. That aside, you can choose from a replica reissue of the original 12" (an edition of 2,500 numbered purple vinyls, with *Beat Box Diversion 10* on the flipside) or a 7" picture disc swapping the original B-side for the rarer JJ's 12" mix of *A Time To Fear*. There was a shaped 7" picture disc of *Moments* in 1985: the XL-designed tortoise-shaped edition. 32 years later, it's followed up with the other side of Aesop's Fable: the disc coming in the shape of a hare, beautifully drawn by Philip Marshall.

01 VARIOUS ARTISTS

JAMES BROWN'S FUNKY PEOPLE

Get On Down

Boston-based label Get On Down won RSD's Adapter Award for Record Store Day Release Of The Year back in 2013 – for its GZA Liquid Swords Chess Box. The label is now on a mission to remind the world of James Brown's legacy as a musician, A&R man and producer, as well as a singer. For last Record Store Day, it released James Brown's *Live At The Apollo Vol IV* on vinyl and the following November, for the spin-off Black Friday event, delivered a vinyl edition of this compilation of late-60s and early-70s cuts from his People Records label, which had originally been released only on CD in 2000.

With 12 tracks across four sides, and heralding Brown as 'Minister Of The New New Super Heavy Funk' on the cover, this is a textbook RSD release in that it brings new life to something precious, but forgotten. The obscurities are what make it compelling: like the trombone and Moog-free Undubbed Version of *Blow Your Head*, the raucous Original Rock Version of *Talking Loud And Saying Nothing* and cuts by a crew of James Brown's backing musicians who wanted to outshine the Average White Band, so called themselves the A.A.B.B: the Above Average Black Band.

02 THE BEATLES
LONG TALL SALLY
EMI

In Mono, vinyl boxset. Limited to 7,000 on black 7", *Long Tall Sally* – historically important, as it was a song Paul sang to John on the very first day they met – is paired with *I Call Your Name* on the A-side, with *Slow Down* and *Matchbox* on the B. Back in '64, this was the fourth in a series of four-track Beatles EPs to hit the shelves, but the first where all songs were previously unreleased.

As much as the music, it's a wonderful record to hold just to re-read Derek Taylor's hilarious and acerbic sleevenotes on the back cover. On Ringo's lead vocal on *Matchbox*: "He sings little, but well, which is better than rotten and often." On the title track: "It's wild and reckless, but beautifully phrased and pure Beatle music, with George backing quite as well as in his notable *Roll Over Beethoven*." And on the international event that the release of a new Beatles EP had become in 1964: "It will sell in millions to the world. Dip it in gold or give it to your grandchildren. Or just simply wear it out."

03 DAVID BOWIE
1984
Parlophone

While EMI and The Beatles' estate have been only occasional RSD participants, those in charge of David Bowie's reissues – and the man himself while he was alive – have taken the event to their hearts and delivered a string of cool and collectible picture discs over the past 10 years. Our favourites include the *Starman* disc from RSD 2012, *The Jean Genie* from that year's Black Friday event, *Drive-In Saturday* from 2013 and 2015's *Changes*.

Back in 2014, there were two 7" picture discs on one day: *Rock 'N' Roll Suicide* in the UK and this one, *1984*, in North America. The track had only originally been a single there and in Japan during the *Diamond Dogs* era, and Bowie can be seen on the cover with William S. Burroughs, whose cut-up tape techniques inspired much of *…Dogs*. A version of the same song recorded live on the *Dick Cavett Show* in December 1974 (and pressed to vinyl for the first time) appeared on the B-side.

04 DEVO
BUTCH DEVO AND THE SUNDANCE GIG
MVD Audio

"In 1995, we closed Sundance Film Festival," Devo's Jerry Casale said of this release. "We wore 20s-style prison suits and we did a special show with really old, hardcore Devo songs from the early 70s, before we ever had a deal." The set was then pressed onto picture disc for Record Store Day in 2014, with a limited edition run of 1,750 – containing 11 tracks in total, including Devo classics *Mongoloid*, *Jocko Homo* and *Whip It*.

Firm supporters of RSD with many special releases to their name, Devo also joined forces with The Flaming Lips in 2014 for a silver vinyl 7", both groups delivering live versions of the same song, *Gates Of Steel*. And they bolstered *Butch Devo And The Sundance Gig* by adding a DVD of the whole one-hour show (and half an hour of footage from rehearsals) and a download card. But look out for the typo on the front of the disc, which says the show took place in 1995, when it was actually January 1996.

05 BEASTIE BOYS
MAKE SOME NOISE
Parlophone

Going back to the 2011 event, this Beastie Boys 7" was limited to just 500 copies, a physical counterpart to the first single from their album of that year, *Hot Sauce Committee Part Two*. Backed with a Passion Pit remix of the same title, it followed 2010's exclusive white-label 12" *Super Surprise*.

It was also one of a whole stream of Parlophone specials for Record Store Day that year. The label embraced the event with similarly designed house bag 7"s from Beck (a collaboration with Bat For Lashes, *Let's Get Lost*, from the *Twilight* film soundtrack), Baxter Dury, Tinie Tempah (then promoting tracks from *Disc-Overy*), Morning Parade (including a Wilkinson remix on the B-side) and Danger Mouse & Daniele Luppi (with a Jack White collab on the A-side and a Norah Jones feature on the B). The other release everyone wanted back in 2011 – and are still looking for today, in some cases – was the 180-gram edition of Gorillaz' *The Fall*, not least for the Bobby Womack guest vocal, *Bobby In Phoenix*.

2017 Shopping list

MARC BOLAN AND THE DAMNED

Here's Marc Bolan and T. Rex at the Rainbow Theatre, London, 18 March 1977. In the 50s, when the venue was still a cinema, Marc had ventured there as a boy to see *Jailhouse Rock*. Unfortunately, the entire gig was not recorded, so the last three songs have been spliced in from the tour's final show at Portsmouth Locarno on 20 March. The Damned were tour support and joined him for the finale, *Get It On* – the last time Bolan performed it. It's presented across two mint-green vinyls, with outer gatefold and inner sleeves carrying tickets and flyers.

06 DEF LEPPARD

DEF LEPPARD

earMUSIC

If we're building the perfect collection of Record Store Day exclusives, here's one for the metallers. Def Leppard delivered this double picture-disc version of their eponymous 2015 album for last year's event, distributed to UK and Germany only. Their 11th studio album, and first for seven years, it's since sold well on eBay. But what are the best-selling RSD picture discs at auction? Top of the list is Bowie's aforementioned *Starman* 7". One of those will now set you back at least £150, with copies often selling for upwards of £250.

Further RSD exclusives include OMD's 2013 special, the 10" picture disc of *The Future Will Be Silent*, which has since sold for £155. Queens Of The Stone Age's *Feel Good Hit Of The Summer*, also a 10" but this time from 2010, sold for £194 in 2016, although that copy was autographed. And the most collectible picture disc from the French version of Record Store Day has been Mylène Farmer's 7" of *Je Te Dis Tout* from 2013 – limited to 1,100 copies – which has since sold for £128.

07 PAUL MCCARTNEY

SAY SAY SAY

MPL

The McCartney collector has a lot to thank Record Store Day for. Like this transparent vinyl 12" reissue from 2015, limited to 3,500 copies, of 1983's *Say Say Say* with Michael Jackson. McCartney dispensed with the John 'Jellybean' Benitez vocal and instrumental mixes on the accompanying *Pipes Of Peace* album reissue, but did add the Jellybean's instrumental mix for the B-side of this 12".

Also that year, Varèse Sarabande reissued McCartney's first solo album on vinyl for RSD, the film soundtrack *The Family Way*. And Parlophone pressed up 100 12" white labels of *Sweet Thrash* aka *Hope For The Future* and discreetly hid them away in the record-shop racks. "[Stores] are specifically advised not to place it among the other Record Store Day exclusives," reported *The Daily Beatle* blog. "When a customer brings it to the register to purchase, the clerk is asked to tell them about the rarity of this release and take their picture."

08 M83

MIRROR

Naïve

The hidden track on their acclaimed 2011 album *Hurry Up, We're Dreaming*, M83 took *Mirror* out of the shadows and into the spotlight a year later as a 7" single for RSD 2012. The one-sided etched disc was released on Mute in the US and Naïve in the UK, where it had a limited run of 500 (and with a misprint, the playing time listed as 45 rpm, when it was in fact 33 rpm). It's hard to describe the music in question, though *PrettyMuchAmazing.com* had it nailed as "a literally epic six minutes of Caribou-esque tribal jam, complete with massive percussion, a steel drum-esque backbeat, and plenty of shimmering layers of atmospheric guitar". Our other favourite etched disc from the annals of RSD exclusives is last year's Junior Kimbrough 12" on Fat Possum, a one-sided remix by Daft Punk in which, as stated on the sticker: 'The duo pays tribute to one of their favourite blues legends, the late, Junior Kimbrough, with an epic 15-min remix.'

09 JOHN WILLIAMS

STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS

Disney

Last year's *Star Wars* 10" picture disc worked on every level. As well as delighting fans of both the format and the soundtrack genre, it also brought a lot of movie and sci-fi buffs back into the world of vinyl. John Williams' *March Of The Resistance* was on one side, with *Rey's Theme* on the other, and with a picture of the Rey-helmed Millennium Falcon being chased across the plains of Jakku by TIE fighters as the main picture.

It wasn't the only *Star Wars*-themed RSD release last year. Perhaps even cooler was *Star Wars* dub, a reissue of the 1978 Phil Pratt album on the Burning Sounds label on 180 gram. It was followed by the more for-completists-only release of *Jabba Flow (feat. A-Trak) [Rick Rubin Re-Work]*, again on 10" picture disc, for Black Friday. This EDM spin-off project came from Shag Kava aka director JJ Abrams and musical partner Lin-Manuel Miranda.

THE GREAT DEBATE

Indie Stores

RSD – noble defender of the grassroots movement or cynical major-label cash-in?

Which Record Store Day camp are you in? Vinylists seem to have one of two views. Either the event is great for independent stores, the vinyl revival and grassroots music. Or what started out as a noble idea has since been hijacked by major labels and turned into a bandwagon stuffed with overpriced, overly limited editions that show straight up on eBay the next day, making unscrupulous 'flippers', more than anyone else, a small fortune.

"I'm in the former category," says Nick Brown, from one of London's most infamous record stores, Intoxica. "We joined up when RSD was still an American-only affair. Then, when people began to take notice in the UK a couple of years later, it was only the major labels that supplied product and supported the idea. The indie labels didn't come into it until a couple of years after that. It was considered by some indies at the time to be a major-label scam, which it never was."

Darren Yeats from VoxBox Music in Edinburgh is in firm agreement: "It hasn't been hijacked by major labels. The majority of the releases are by artists with independent distribution. There are three major labels and around 10 independent distributors. Through RSD, we have been able to develop relationships with distributors that I would never have found otherwise, and so improve the range that we stock and can arrange in-store and other promotional events."

"I totally get both sides of the argument about RSD," explains Paul Wade from the Humanitas charity vinyl store, "and I completely understand people's cynicism, especially regarding the price of records. But from our point of view, I think it's important to remember the aim of RSD and why it exists in the first place: which is to get people into their local record shops and to get them excited about buying vinyl. And it achieves this.

"I'm pretty sure for every independent music retailer, RSD is their best day of the year for takings and we certainly noticed a knock-on effect, as more people became aware of our store as a result of it. So, despite it being a lot of work for us as a shop – and the fact that you inevitably get stuck with RSD releases that you can't give away, months later – we look forward to it, because it is a day that celebrates music, there is always a great atmosphere and seeing everyone so excited about vinyl makes it worth it."

> "RECORD STORE DAY HAS BEEN GREAT FOR US AND HELPED US KEEP OUR SHOP AFLOAT – WITHOUT IT, WE MAY NOT STILL BE HERE"
>
> **JONATHAN SMITH INTENSE RECORDS, CHELMSFORD**

So not only has RSD reignited vinyl, it's done the same for the stores, saving many from an almost-certain demise. One of which might have been Intense Records in Chelmsford. "Record Store Day has been great for us and helped us keep our shop afloat – without it, we may not still be here," reports the manager, Jonathan Smith. "Not only has it increased sales on that particular day, but it has introduced our shop to a whole new audience that wasn't currently aware of our shop, that now frequents our store on a regular basis. Although the majors have jumped on the bandwagon, there's still a huge number of independent releases that may not have seen the light of day, which is good for the music and vinyl scene…"

But what about those eBay flippers? "To my knowledge, it's primarily bedroom dealers who bang the item up on eBay a couple of minutes after they've bought it, not 'bricks and mortar' shops," says Nick from Intoxica. "If shops are caught selling the stuff for over the odds, they'll get thrown off the list, and they know that would be nuts!"

Besides, what can be done? "On the eBay debate, I do think it's a shame that dealers are getting their hands on items before genuine fans," concedes Richard Farnell from Manchester's Vinyl Exchange, "but there are rules in place from RSD that limit them to one each of any title and I can't see what else they could do to discourage it."

Rather than encourage eBay flippers in the quest for missed RSD vinyls, Matt Hawton from Marrs Plectrum, an indie store in Peterborough, has some sound advice. "Generally, the prices drop after a few weeks, so if you don't manage to get the release you're after, just be patient. Last year, we managed to re-stock a few items the following week at normal prices. And is there really much of an issue with eBay? The day after the last RSD, I searched for the exclusive releases within five miles of Marrs Plectrum on eBay, for a flavour as to how many of my customers were flipping them. The result? One person had listed about 10 items, that was it. I can live with that. If there's 100 copies of a record that had a run of 2,000 pressed on eBay, that's only five per cent. The whole eBay issue is blown way out of proportion," he concludes. "If RSD releases weren't of such a high quality, if no one wanted them, they wouldn't be on eBay in the first place. It's a testament to the music that comes out on RSD. Customers have an appetite for the records. Whenever something is collectible and limited, there's a spike in its value online. It's just normal commerce, but people do like a moan, eh?"

10 DEREK & CLIVE

PUNK SONG

Universal

Derek & Clive – the alter egos of Dudley Moore and Peter Cook – released a string of spoken-word albums in the late 70s but this punk pastiche went unheard until it was dusted off for a first release on *Rude & Rare*, a Derek & Clive anthology in 2010. With a live recording from a 1973 New York show on the B-side, this is probably the best RSD comedy vinyl to date. What were once seen as naff novelties, comedy records are becoming increasingly cool and increasingly collectible. Check our Shopping List for info on the *Fawlty Towers* release coming this year, which follows *Knowing Me Knowing You*, the 'DV from AP' (debut vinyl from Alan Partridge) for last year's event. Our other recommendation comes from deep in 2015's exclusives crates: a 2,500-run 7" picture disc with three songs taken from the soundtrack to *Live Freaky! Die Freaky!* a musical film that retold the story of Charles Manson with stop-motion animation.

11 PET SHOP BOYS

LOVE LIFE

Parlophone

Pet Shop Boys releases for RSD have been surprisingly thin on the ground. We've only spotted two over the years, the first – and most sought after – being this Parlophone-bagged 7" from 2010. "Side A features *Love Life*, Pet Shop Boys' hitherto unreleased 2001 recording of a song which became a hit for the Swedish group Alcazar," the duo announced. "Side B has *A Powerful Friend*, recorded in 2002 and never released before, which features *Release* tour guitarists Bic Hayes and Mark Refoy."

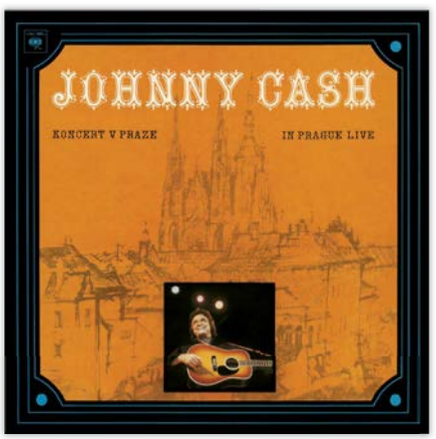
They followed this in 2014 with a limited 12" of *Fluorescent*, released on on their x2 label. Re-recorded from its album version, this was the only release for either mix, the Indio Mix on the A-side and the Cali Mix on the B. The latter added some additional rap lyrics – just as they did for the 10" of *West End Girls* all those years ago – the highlight of which comes when Neil intones "Art's too much in love with art, you say, and not enough in love with life today."

12 JOHNNY CASH

KONCERT V PRAZE

Columbia

Ring Of Fire and then straight into *Folsom Prison Blues*. Now that's how you start off a gig… There then follow 13 more songs of, not only Cash at his best, but Cash at his best recorded in Prague in 1983. Historic stuff… Or, as stated on the sticker on this run of 4,525 copies, 'Recorded live behind the iron curtain! Now on Soviet red 180-gram vinyl!' This 2015 RSD exclusive lead to not one but two Johnny Cash-related releases for RSD last year. Columbia came out with *The Best Of The Johnny Cash TV Show: 1969-1971* which featured his opening theme, *I Walk The Line*, and songs from Tammy Wynette, Derek And The Dominos, Kris Kristofferson and Roy Orbison doing a four-minute medley of *Only The Lonely* and *Oh, Pretty Woman*. Sun Records, meanwhile, reissued *All Aboard The Blue Train*, Cash's 1962 album for the label, with a run of 3,000 copies on, appropriately enough, blue vinyl.



2017 Shopping List

DOCTOR WHO

A feast for Tom Baker-era *…Who* fans, this gatefold double LP pairs an original audio story with a *Doctor Who* sound effects album. The story disc is *Doctor Who And The Pescatons* (pressed onto 'Pescaton Green coloured vinyl') split simply into two parts and voiced by Tom, with Elisabeth Sladen as Sarah-Jane. The sound-effects disc, on 180-gram orange vinyl, is a 25-track affair. It's pressed on coloured vinyl with sound effects called *Fission Gun, Tesh Gun, Vardan Gun* and *Gallifreyan Staser Gun*. Of course it is. Thank Record Store Day for that!

13 RAMONES

TURNTABLE

Crosley

In 2015, The Ramones thought out of the box with this limited-edition pink Crosley turntable, distributed exclusively to indie stores on Record Store Day. "Crosley was the only one that would talk to us," RSD's Michael Kurtz once told *Crave* magazine of the early days of the organisation's ongoing turntable partnership when "in 2006, 2007, every single industry story was about the death of record stores". This led to the Ramones project and, the next year, a three-speed Disney-themed turntable with Mickey Mouse on the front. But why Mickey? Because "the appreciation of records skipped a generation in the 90s", explained Kurtz's co-founder, Carrie Colliton, in the same interview. "We want to get kids interested in the magic of records at a young age, so that doesn't happen again."

In 2015, the Ramones Crosley was the jewel in the crown of a fine year for rock exclusives, which also saw a five-disc set from the Grateful Dead, *Wake Up To Find Out*; The Stooges' *Have Some Fun: Live At Ungano's* reissued from 1970 on black-and-white spattered vinyl and The Replacements' *Alex Chilton* on 10".

14 MILES DAVIS

THE PRESTIGE 10-INCH LP COLLECTION

Prestige

Prestige has used Record Store Day as the platform to deliver two spellbinding Miles Davis archive sets. *Volume One* of *The Prestige 10-Inch LP Collection* arrived for 2014's Black Friday event and presented replicas of the first five 10" albums from Davis' time with Prestige Records – 1951 to 1954. The first disc, *Modern Jazz Trumpets*, also featured work by Dizzy Gillespie, while the fourth, simply titled *Miles Davis Quartet*, had piano from Charles Mingus. *Volume Two*, pictured here, arrived in time for 2015's main April event and housed reissues of the remaining five albums from this period. Davis fans should also look out for a 5,000-run 12" from last year's event on Legacy. Start with the B-side, *The Ghetto Walk*, which was an outtake from *In A Silent Way*. Then flip to the A-side, which takes that track and adds vocals from Bilal and production from Robert Glasper to become the title track – the all-new *Ghetto Walkin'* – a taste for Glasper's album of Davis remixes and reinterpretations, *Everything's Beautiful*.

2017 Shopping List

THE DURUTTI COLUMN

One of the great lost Factory moments is limited to 500 copies on clear vinyl with a cover photo by Mark Warner. "It was recorded by Vini Reilly in 1983," Factory's James Nice explains. "The 14-tracks feature several key Durutti works including *College, A Room In Southport* and *Duet*. This poignant instrumental proved – ironically – to be the album's downfall, after Factory's founder (and Durutti's manager) Tony Wilson insisted it form the basis of a neoclassical album. As a result, *Duet* became *Without Mercy* and *Short Stories For Pauline* was shelved."

15 BRIAN ENO

MY SQUELCHY LIFE

Opal

Limited-run editions for Record Store Day have proved the perfect platform, and motivation, for artists to dig out lost and shelved works and finally give them a public airing. Like this one from Brian Eno, which got a two-disc run of 4,000 for April 2015's event.

My Squelchy Life was all set for release in September 1991. But he pulled it from the schedules at the last minute, rethinking everything and building a new album out of the ashes, which became 1992's *Nerve Net* (which included a nod to its abandoned predecessor, with track four: *My Squelchy Life*). But the original album started to leak out on bootleg in the late 90s and became the subject of Eno legend. So the masters were dusted off – and another track from the sessions, *Rapid Eye*, added – to make this limited edition. Eno fans should also hunt down 2013's RSD special: a 12" collab with Nicolas Jaar and Grizzly Bear, the 2,000-limited *Sleeping Ute* on Warp Records.

16 U2

SONGS OF INNOCENCE

Island

It may have caused a storm when U2's *Songs Of Innocence* arrived out of the blue, 'free' – whether you were a fan or not – on everyone's iTunes account. But the vinyl edition of the album met with a far warmer reception.

Released exclusively for Record Store Day in 2015, the two-LP set replicated the digital version's 'promo only'-style artwork and was limited to 5,000 machine-numbered copies.

This has since become perhaps the most valuable of the Record Store Day releases to date, with edition No. 0001 selling on eBay for £2,520, and edition No. 0002 selling for £587.

But its 'white label look' led to an even rarer edition for at least two buyers who picked up a copy from Banquet Records in South London. Inside, they found a copy of Tool's *Opiate* EP from 1992, on account of a mix-up at the pressing plant and Tool's strikingly similar artwork.

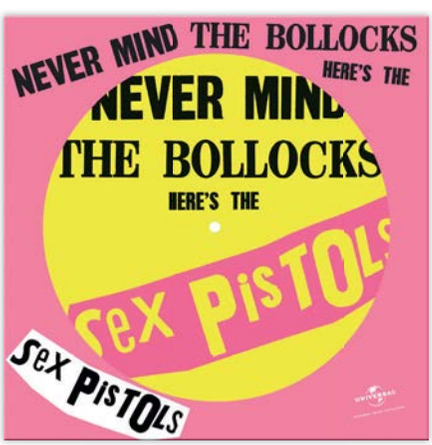
17 SEX PISTOLS

NEVER MIND THE BOLLOCKS

Universal

The perfect companion piece to 2010's Derek & Clive 7", five years later, RSD gave rise to a picture-disc edition of the Pistol's notorious *…Bollocks*. At that time, the album had recently been remastered from the original tapes for both a vinyl and CD anniversary repack, but this version took the 1978 picture-disc edition as its design inspiration. The following year's event saw a US-only version of the picture disc limited to 5,000 copies with a salmon-pink-and-green colour combo the only difference from 2015's salmon pink/yellow.

But the most in-depth Pistols RSD edition appeared in 2014: a seven 7" box set, six of which presented alternate takes from the album's sessions, and the seventh of which contained very rare 1977 versions of *Belsen Was A Gas*. Funny to think the other release that got most of the attention at that year's event was a 7" of One Direction's *Midnight Memories* (b/w *Rock Me*).



RECORD STORE DAY

What's Next?

With Record Store Day now reaching the grand old age of 10, what's next – and how should it develop across the next 10 years? We called in at independent record stores across the length and breadth of the UK to ask that very question…

"With 10 years already, RSD must be doing something right. In the future, I'd like to see more non-vinyl releases and slightly odd music-related things. I wrote to the publishers of *The Beano* asking them to do a reprint of the John Mayall's *Blues Breakers With Eric Clapton* 'Beano' album for RSD. Original copies of the 1966 *Beano* comic that Clapton is reading on the cover of that record sell for around £75. But they never replied. A lot of people would recreate the photo after buying a reprint, I'm sure…"

DARREN YEATS VOXBOX MUSIC, EDINBURGH

"It would be nice if they could find a way to bring some of the costs down, as a lot of people simply can't afford some of the prices that records go for on the day. There is definitely a fear younger generations in particular will stay away due to the costs of records. It'd be nice if it felt like a day that was accessible for all, and not primarily for collectors. Ultimately, records are made to be played and shouldn't be stored away like the Holy Grail, so if the smaller labels could compete evenly with the majors, then maybe there would be more emphasis on the music and not the artefact."

PAUL WADE HUMANITAS, HERTFORDSHIRE

"I think, as for the future, the answer is pretty obvious: the labels should only issue records that will actually be of interest to customers and prices should be considerably lower than they are now. Also, there are usually a small number of records that everyone wants. Larger quantities of these should be manufactured so they don't sell out in the first five minutes."

CHARLES TAYLOR RECKLESS RECORDS, LONDON

"Perhaps we could see some spin-off days throughout the year, where a small number of releases are made available to encourage the record-buying public to visit local stores rather than buy online. Other than that, the guys at Record Store Day are doing a very good job and deserve a pat on the back."

JONATHAN SMITH INTENSE RECORDS, CHELMSFORD

"FOR US, WE'D SIMPLY LIKE TO SEE IT GROW AS MUCH IN THE NEXT 10 YEARS AS IT HAS DONE IN THE FIRST 10 YEARS!"

TOM RELEVANT RECORDS, CAMBRIDGE

"How would I like to see it develop in the future? Possibly by focusing on new acts more, rather than allowing labels to repackage the same old titles that people probably own already in several formats. This might support and encourage new artists and smaller record labels, too."

RICHARD FARNELL VINYL EXCHANGE, MANCHESTER

18 A-HA

TAKE ON ME

Rhino

Perhaps this particular 'limited' run of 3,000 copies was a little over-ambitious; but with a still from the famous video on the A-side (and tastefully carrying the graphic theme onto the sticker), the B-side added a live rendition. The perfect accompaniment to the other mythical picture disc in the A-ha canon: *The Sun Always Shines On TV* flexi issued back in the 80s on the front cover of *Number One* magazine. The group followed up with a 3,000-run 12" for last year's event: *A-ha Hits South America* had four tracks recorded live in Porto Alegre, Brazil. Could there be a better B-side of an EP than this: an eight-minute version of *Stay On These Roads*, followed by a seven-minute rendition of the Coldplay favourite *Hunting High And Low*?

19 RAY PARKER JR.

GHOSTBUSTERS

Sony

A glow-in-the-dark 12" from 2014 which looked amazing, but sparked debate due to high prices (especially compared to how cheap the original edition can still be bought for). Are Record Store Day releases priced too high? Having taken a barometer to indie stores around the UK, the consensus is that – if the music justifies it and it's appropriately 'special', then, no, most limited editions are priced fairly. "Some of the releases are expensive, as they really are limited," explains Darren Yeats from Edinburgh's VoxPop. "A short run costs a lot more to make and the band's royalty will be a lot less… if you're buying a very limited-edition item, then the artist still needs to get paid. Yes, some releases are incredibly expensive. The solution for those? Don't buy them!"

20 THE ALLMAN BROTHERS BAND

PLAY ALL NIGHT

Music On Vinyl

Should there be more curation to filter the tidal wave of RSD exclusive releases? No, that's the job of the record-buying public, says Nick from Intoxica Records. "As a shop, you have the choice… If you don't want to stock some overpriced coloured vinyl Allman Brothers reissue LP, then don't," he says. "As a customer, if you don't want to buy an overpriced coloured-vinyl Allman Brothers reissue LP, then don't. To dictate what releases can and cannot be put into the RSD schedule is censorship, which Intoxica just does not agree with." Nick's example was hypothetical, which is just as well – as who can deny the blues intensity of *Hoochie Coochie Man*, recorded live at The Beacon Theatre in 1992, released on this double 180-gram vinyl for RSD in 2014?

"My only suggestion would be that perhaps some labels might like to consult more closely with some of the shops about what could be released. Otherwise, it appears to be developing quite nicely as it is. Each year brings different releases and events, which is great."

NICK BROWN
INTOXICA, LONDON

2017 Shopping list

ENNIO MORRICONE

1998's *The Legend Of 1900* – also known as *The Legend Of The Pianist On The Ocean* – won Ennio Morricone a Golden Globe Award for Best Original Score. It closes with a surprise collaboration (none other than Roger Waters pops up on *Lost Boys Calling*) and is to be pressed up on 180-gram clear vinyl, limited to 1,000. The first of a series of 12 Morricone reissues scheduled to appear this year, it should feel, as well as look and sound, very appealing as – the label tells us – the record will be "packed in an exclusive super-deluxe soft-touch jacket with silver-foil finish".

2017 SHOPPING LIST

The Best of the Rest

From wooden discs to 'marigold yellow' vinyl, here are some more exclusive releases for Record Store Day 2017 to consider for your shopping list

BRETT ANDERSON
LIVE AT KOKO 2011

Anderson played much of his fourth solo album *Black Rainbows* at this show and the night is now pressed on dark-green vinyl, with unseen rehearsal photos adorning the inner bag.

ASOBI SEKSU
CITRUS

Out of print for the past six years, One Little Indian has revived the second album by New York-based shoegazers Asobi Seksu onto gatefold 180-gram black with a DMM cut.

CRYSTAL FIGHTERS
STAR OF LOVE

Folktronica pioneers Crystal Fighters go back to their 2010 debut album for a 500-copy reissue on their own Zirkulo Records designed as a faux white label in a disco-styled house bag.

DEAD OR ALIVE
UNBREAKABLE

Complementing Demon Records' exhaustive *Sophisticated Boom Box MMXVI* box set, this is a first-time-on-record release (and weighing in on 180-gram clear vinyl) for 2001's 10-track *The Fragile Remixes*.

VARIOUS ARTISTS
DON ORIGINAL SOUNDTRACK

Soundtrack specialists Silva Screen take this heavily sampled 1978 Bollywood classic and give it a first-ever vinyl reissue, and on 500-limited 'marigold yellow' vinyl to boot.

MARIANNE FAITHFULL
RICH KID BLUES

Originally released in 1971 and out of print on record since 1985, here, Faithfull covers Bob Dylan, George Harrison and Cat Stevens for this silver vinyl reissue.

VARIOUS ARTISTS
FAWLTY TOWERS

The full audio from two episodes on one picture disc, with a great photo of Basil Fawlty on the front. *Mrs Richards* is on the A-side, with the classic *Hotel Inspectors* on the B.

JOE JACKSON
FOOLS IN LOVE

1,000 copies of this will be pressed, with 500 reserved for RSD UK, a 10" white-vinyl edition of live tracks – b/w *Music To Watch Girls By* – on earMUSIC.

MARILLION
FEAR

FEAR is a double LP from earMUSIC on golden-coloured vinyl and limited to 1,000 copies. It was previously released in 2016 on black.

PROCOL HARUM
A WHITER SHADE OF PALE ANNIVERSARY EP

The Fly label commemorates the 50th anniversary of *A Whiter Shade Of Pale* by gathering all recordings from the group's first- and second-ever recording sessions, including previously unreleased stereo mixes

TRISTRAM CARY
QUATERMASS AND THE PIT SOUNDTRACK

Tristram Cary's 1967 Hammer soundtrack will be pressed in four different colours – red, green, blue and yellow – each limited to 300 copies. Also look out for a 1,000-limited luminous 10" companion EP of soundtrack cues.

SL2
ON A RAGGA TIP

A 12" artefact for sample-ologists, this has SL2's 1992 hit single on one side, with the original dancehall track it sampled – Jah Screechy's *Walk & Skank* – on the other.

SUGAR
COPPER BLUE

A great way to mark the 25th anniversary of Sugar's game-changing debut, Demon has added a live performance from Cabaret Metro in Chicago in 1992 across three discs – one silver, one gold and one blue – to mirror the original album art.

SUN RA
HELLO MR. SCHIMMEL

Limited to 750 copies, the Gearbox label has pressed up a 33 rpm 7" (a curio in itself) of a previously unreleased Sun Ra solo-piano improvisation, captured by Jazz FM during an interview in June 1990. ●

2017 Shopping List

THE RESIDENTS

Stars of *Long Live Vinyl*'s flexi disc, The Residents are no strangers to RSD. They've come up with an expanded edition of the *Diskomo/Goosebump* EP, limited to 1,000 copies on transparent red vinyl, via the Music On Vinyl label. All the songs were built from samples of toy instruments and three bonus tracks have been added: *Diskomo 1992, Diskomo 2000* and *Twinkle 2000*. It's a follow up to last year's pink-vinyl replica of a 1979 promo album called *This Is A Special DJ Record Of The Residents' Alleged Music. Please Do Not Steal It! Keep It At Your Station – We Need The Radio Airplay.*

kscope 180g heavyweight vinyl editions

www.kscopemusic.com

Porcupine Tree

The Delerium Years 1991-1993

9LP box set remastered by Steven Wilson

This box includes On the Sunday of Life..., Up the Downstair, the Staircase Infinities mini album, compilation album Yellow Hedgerow Dreamscape and Voyage 34: The Complete Trip. Featuring a 40 page book with rare and unseen material plus extensive biographical liner notes by Stephen Humphries.

www.kscopemusic.com/pt

BLACKFIELD

V

Steven Wilson & Aviv Geffen return to full collaborative mode on new album

"Aviv'n'Steven in perfect harmony once again. V sounds rapturous"
PROG MAGAZINE

"The band's palette is rich and assuredly dense."
CLASSIC ROCK

www.kscopemusic.com/bf

Richard Barbieri

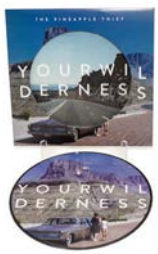
Planets + Persona

New studio album from the JAPAN and PORCUPINE TREE keyboard maestro. His most sonically expansive work to date with an array of guest performers.

"This confirms Barbieri as one of our most invaluable musicians"
PROG MAGAZINE

www.kscopemusic.com/rb

THE PINEAPPLE THIEF



Your Wilderness

Picture disc of the acclaimed album featuring Gavin Harrison (King Crimson & Porcupine Tree) on drums. Available exclusively for Record Store Day.

"Amplifier busting riffage"
PROG MAGAZINE

www.kscopemusic.com/tpt

RECORD STORE DAY

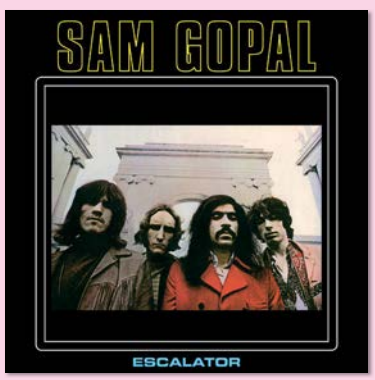
THE ANCHORESS

Confessions of a Romance Novelist

Debut album from multi-instrumentalist, songwriter and producer Catherine A.D. Co-produced by and feat. Paul Draper (Mansun).

"Kate Bush's Hounds of Love... updated for the 21st century."
PROG MAGAZINE

www.kscopemusic.com/anc



SAM GOPAL / Escalator
BT5012
Record Store Day release on 180 gram Vinyl.
Feat. Motorhead's Lemmy on Vocals

CHIMERA / Holy Grail
BT5011
Record Store Day release on 180 gram Vinyl.
Remastered from Original Master Tapes.
Feat. Pink Floyd's Nick Mason & Rick Wright

VINYL TITLES FROM SECRET RECORDS

ALL ON HEAVY WEIGHT 180 GRAM VINYL

THE WEDDING PRESENT
Plugged In
SECLP118

THE ANIMALS
Animalisms
SECLP087

FLEETWOOD MAC &
CHRISTINE PERFECT BAND
Hey Baby
SECLP091

JOHN MAYALL
Howling At The Moon
SECLP077

MICHAEL CHAPMAN
Savage Amusement
SECLP138

SHAKATAK
Live In Japan
SECLP080

THE SMOKE
It's Smoke Time
BT5008G
(on grey vinyl)

PUSSY
Pussy Plays
BT5002C
(on cream vinyl)

JOHNNY THUNDERS
I Think I Got This Covered
SECLP144

DESMOND DEKKER
The King Of Ska
SECLP140

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The Trip

Soho

After Mark Elliott's trip around Brighton in Issue 1 of LLV, he continues his journeys to major vinyl goldmines with the most famous of all: Soho in London…

Fings Ain't Wot They Used T'Be… Well, quite. Lionel Bart and Frank Norman's musical celebration of Cockney culture may date from 1960, but as anyone who's visited the area recently will recognise, it could just as easily reference the state of Soho in 2017.

The developers have moved in over recent years and London's booming property market has given the capital's most colourful quarter a whitewash that's rendered it largely unrecognisable from the square mile that's fed my vinyl habit for as long as I can remember.

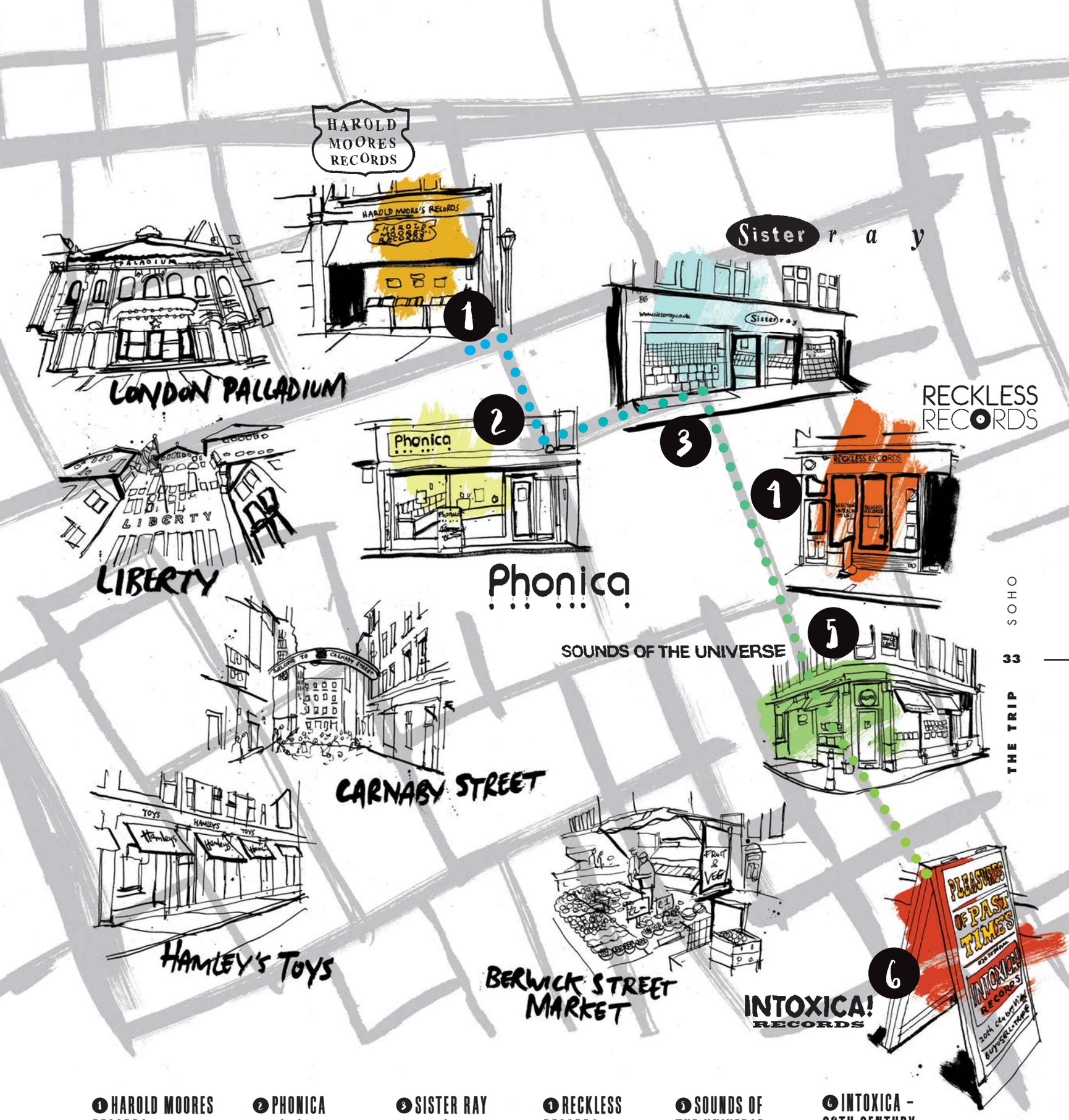
Some shops have survived almost unscathed, but unfortunately for us, many have closed – and the ferocious pace of change here makes one almost surprised when you turn up to find trading still buzzing. Still, in part down to its stunning heritage of music shopping, Soho's defiant dealers are upbeat about the future. The annual Record Store Day does spectacular business here and that, in part, keeps a vibrant – but shrinking – band of retailers focused on capitalising on the vinyl boom, despite the soaring rents.

In part down to its stunning heritage of music shopping, Soho's dealers are upbeat

1 HAROLD MOORES RECORDS

My first port of call is a London institution. Harold Moores Records is considered to be one of the world's best classical-music stores, featuring opera, baroque, nostalgia and jazz on vinyl and CD. If proof were needed that Soho is undergoing violent, dramatic change – and rarely for the better – then here it is.

A simple sign in the window marks its sudden closure and the stock already looks largely removed from the racks inside. I'd walked past just a few days earlier and it appeared as busy as ever. This is another big blow to the area and doesn't launch my trip well. It joins the much-missed Berwick Street Music & Video Exchange (which the website for this chain of London legends, now updated and rebranded to Music & Goods Exchange, still claims will return this year) in the graveyard of central London record dealers. Surely, that sad plot is full enough by now? Thankfully, there's still life elsewhere and my day went much better after that shaky start.



1 HAROLD MOORES RECORDS
2 Great Marlborough St, Soho, London W1F 7HQ
hmrecords.co.uk
Opening hours
10am to 6.30pm
Monday to Saturday

2 PHONICA
51 Poland Street
W1F 7LZ
phonicarecords.com
Opening hours
11.30am to 7.30pm
Monday to Saturday;
noon to 6pm Sunday

3 SISTER RAY
75 Berwick Street
W1F 8TG
sisterray.co.uk
Opening hours
10am to 8pm Monday
to Saturday; noon to
6pm Sunday

4 RECKLESS RECORDS
30 Berwick Street, Soho W1F 8RH
reckless.co.uk
Opening hours
10am to 7pm Monday
to Sunday

5 SOUNDS OF THE UNIVERSE
7 Broadwick Street, Soho W1F ODA
soundsoftheuniverse.com
Opening hours
10am to 7.30pm Monday to
Saturday (8pm on Thursday);
11.30am to 5.30pm Sunday

6 INTOXICA – 20TH CENTURY VINYL
11 Cecil Court, Charing Cross WC2N 4EZ
intoxica.co.uk
Opening hours
11am to 6pm Tuesday to
Friday; noon to 6pm Saturday

2 PHONICA

My clubbing phase peaked around the time of Cappella and C+C Music Factory, so it's ridiculous to expect that Phonica's impressive range of (largely) new dance discs is going to speak to me much, but first impressions can be misleading. The selection is broader than you might expect. I pick up a copy of the recent 7" single from The xx – *On Hold* – which samples the Hall & Oates 1981 classic *I Can't Go For That (No Can Do)* to marvellous effect, in my opinion.

As a taster for their *I See You* album, the single served them well and I'd abandoned all hope of picking up one of the 3,000-copy run. I'm pleased to be proved wrong. Like the other Soho venues, Phonica takes Record Store Day very seriously and, despite the friendly banter with the chaps behind the counter, I am unable to secure any exclusives for this report. Likely they are in the dark as much as the rest of us at time of writing, but this crew really knows its stuff and there's an easy confidence about the whole operation. Unsurprisingly, this is about as 'lifestyle' as crate-digging ever gets; except, of course, there's nothing remotely as functional as a plastic crate in this store. Think steel beams and lacquered wood, but with vinyl prices that won't break the bank.

3 SISTER RAY

This Soho institution, famously immortalised on the cover of *What's The Story (Morning Glory)* by Oasis, is the obvious next stop. Appearances can be deceptive, however, and you may not at first spot that its current home is actually almost opposite where it used to be situated. The store crossed the street nearly three years ago, after a tough patch when the original business went into administration in 2008.

I still miss the cavernous old branch with its double-fronted windows packed with new releases, but this two-storey reincarnation maintains a fantastic reputation for fast-changing stock and some incredible finds. The used sales racks, in particular, have done me proud over the decades.

Today is no exception, with a nice Music For Pleasure compilation of *The Most Collection*. This package of Mickie Most-produced pop came in two volumes and it's lost to history why I have a cherished copy of the second set, but not the first. Rod Stewart's 1969 cover of *Jailhouse Rock* opens this 12-track volume, also featuring Jeff Beck and The Animals, and, at £2.99, it's a snip!

Something I didn't know existed was a 1986 special edition of Samantha Fox's debut album, *Touch Me*, including two new-at-the-time tracks and the inevitable remixes of the more familiar hits.

Packaged in a lavish gatefold sleeve (naturally, given the photogenic appeal of the act) it leaps out at me and I'm gobsmacked! I truly thought I had everything by Sam, so that'll teach me to do my research more thoroughly. In a bid to gain credibility with our goddaughter, I also take a copy of The Weeknd's translucent-red vinyl LP *Starboy*. It does the trick.

Over an ice-cream at Fortnum & Mason later that day, I'm thrilled to report she spontaneously posts a picture of my purchase on Instagram. It's a rare commendation of credibility from anyone, let alone someone actually young! Sister Ray can always be guaranteed to stock a decent range of the new releases and a copy of David Bowie's latest 7" picture disc, *Sound And Vision*, also finds its way into my shopping basket. Capitalising on the boom in east London record shopping, the business – which was named after a 1968 track by The Velvet Underground – has a second branch at The Ace Hotel in Shoreditch High Street that is worth a look, too, if you're over that way.

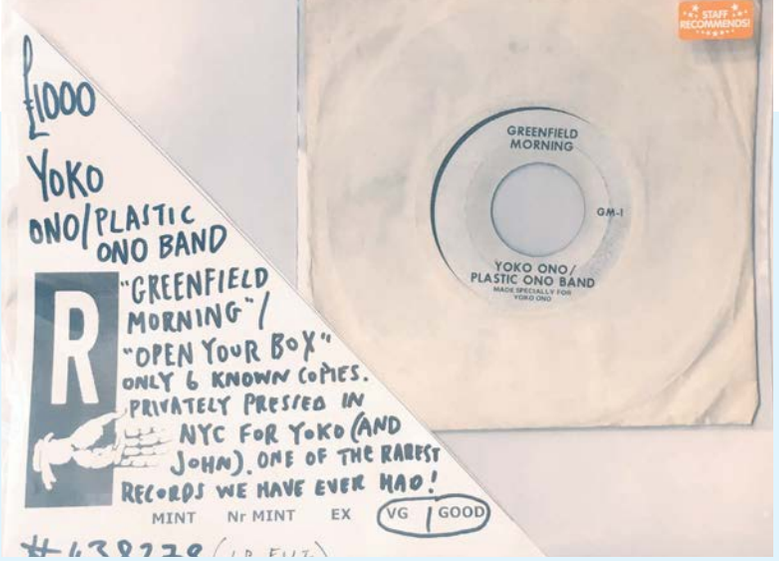
> ***You may not at first spot that its current home is actually almost opposite where it used to be***

Today, things really are looking up for this much-loved retailer. This Soho branch offers good prices for stuff you want to offload and there's a chap at the counter discussing a deal for some interesting-sounding Motown as I head on.

Thinking about my Samantha Fox find, I wish more people appreciated stuff like this. Not for the first time…

1 RECKLESS RECORDS

Billed as the place you'll get the highest prices for your unwanted discs, Reckless Records is a buzzy, narrow shop with a range that moves as fast as lightning. Many a time I have spotted something I want, left it a day while I considered the investment and returned only to find it already sold. Today, I get rid of the handful of my spare records in a brisk, business-like fashion – it's always so easy here and the team know their stuff – and then predictably start buying more to replace them. The soul racks here are particularly strong and, inspired by my visit to Sister Ray, I decide I should invest more in Motown. Predictably, I pass on the pricier Supremes gems and settle on a nice copy of Smokey Robinson's 1982 12" of *Old Fashioned Love*. It's housed in a neat Motown sleeve and I reason I have to start this expansion of my existing catalogue from the label somewhere. Also capturing my eye is the debut single from Mari Wilson. *Loveman* appeared on the GTO imprint and I have never seen a picture-sleeve copy before. At £5, this one is an investment I don't have to think overnight about. They always stock good picture discs at Reckless and I pick up a couple of Slade 7" picture-discs for *Okey Cokey* and the later *Myzsterious Mizster Jones*. The former is a



1982 reissue billed with a (to me) ridiculous idea – 'No synthesisers used'. I have a soft spot for Slade and, in any case, it failed to chart on its original release in 1979 or in 1982, so that was probably enough punishment for them for such an absurd idea. Then I spy today's piece de resistance: a shaped 7" picture-disc from Cliff Richard. *Heart User* doesn't trouble many chart historians (it peaked at No. 46 in 1985) but I have always liked it and this release – shaped like a heart for Valentine's Day, no doubt – was one of many tricks that kept an army of imaginative product managers employed in the boom record-label years of the 1980s. As a collector focused on this time, I yet again question the sense of picking a decade when multiple editions buoyed chart positions and soaked up every spare penny of fans' pocket money. It's an easy era to source, but the variants appear limitless. As if proving the point, I pick up yet another copy of The Blow Monkeys' *Out With Her*. This time, the 12" comes in a poster sleeve and will join the three editions of this No. 30 hit I already own. The better half – as ever, dutifully following me around to take these pictures before we head on to something/ anything (in his eyes) more interesting – is already shaking his head at the sheer futility of my ambition to snap up everything from the 10-year stretch and so I reason it's probably best to cut my losses while we still have a marriage (and therefore a house to store all this stuff in).

Top five

1 DO YOUR RESEARCH
These dealers will have been offered many hundreds of copies of Paul Young's *No Parlez* in their time and likely won't want them this time, either. Take the dealer's first offer on what they *do* want as a decent one and only be prepared to bargain if you are certain of your facts. The Soho dealers have seen it all before, so the first offer is likely to be your last.

2 THE PICKINGS ARE RICH
The Soho traders are used to having the local media outlets offload their press samples and much prefer to trawl through a collection of promos, so you may find you'll get a better price outside of town for a lot of your spare items. But if you've got something rare or an interesting collection, this is the area you'll shift it quickly in.

3 TIME YOUR APPROACH
Saturdays are heaving with tourists in London, so the best time to go is midweek. Avoid lunchtimes, too. The shops are packed with workers desperate to escape the grind of the day-to-day for a few brief minutes.

4 GENRES TRADE BEST
The fabulous melting pot of London throws up every type of collector under the sun, so this is the place to come if you have something unusual. Likely, they'll have seen it all before, but they will also know where and how to sell it.

5 SELL IN BULK
Many dealers prefer to take a set of records at once. They enjoy the search for something unexpected as much as you do!

5 SOUNDS OF THE UNIVERSE

Now this is one of these stores that has a touch of everything. Long partnered with Soul Jazz Records, this handsome two-storey shop sells a comprehensive range of (mainly new) vinyl and CDs on the ground floor and, to my mind at least, and has an even more exciting basement with a wider range of second-hand genres; it's also one of the best places in the capital to pick up new and used music books.

The ground floor has a fascinating mix of stock and is, again, one of the stores to make sure you visit on or soon after Record Store Day. If soul, funk, disco or world music is your thing, here is a bigger range than you'll find anywhere central. It's also got that heart-in-your mouth visual appeal, with the walls stacked with racks of product all beautifully labelled. Seriously, who could honestly resist something tagged with the descriptive line 'Beaty Balearic Joy'? To my mind, this always looks like a place you'll find treasure.

There are some decks for punters and a gaggle of French student types have clearly unearthed some gold and are putting the decks to good use. I'm intrigued and, in truth, can't count the number of times I've been turned on to something by a fellow shopper's enthusiasm (it's raised an eyebrow on more than one occasion, but I first discovered Taylor Dayne this way and, buoyed by this success, have stuck with the strategy ever since). This time, my O Level French is failing me and I'm straining to translate their 100-miles-an-hour conversation. Frustrated, I leave them to it and head downstairs. My stories about record-shop conversations are a whole different feature for another time…

So here, I pick up the 12" US-issued picture-sleeve copy of Company B's *Full Circle* – a US Top 10 dance hit from 1987 that's long been on my wish list. This American freestyle act (think Exposé, but less famous) are best known for *Fascinated*, long-since credited for the inspiration behind Bananarama's better-remembered *I Can't Help It*. This is a really nice copy and it's labelled 'Electro Paradise Garage Style'. I'm thrilled to find it and, anyway, how can I resist after such an enthusiastic billing? Soho's nightlife heritage means this is one of those cities where obscure dance records often turn up, in my experience. I'm still searching for a copy of Lisa Lougheed's synth-pop Hi-NRG classic *Run With Us*, but almost everything else has been spotted sometime over the years I have been shopping here (albeit sometimes at a pricetag I have had to gasp at). There's perhaps less rock and pop than you'll find elsewhere, but this store must be on your trip (especially for new stock; I think it has one of the best selections in London).

6 INTOXICA – 20TH CENTURY VINYL

Billed as the place you'll discover 'all the records you're unlikely to find in London', this treasure trove of a shop is a true hidden gem, tucked as it is down a side street packed with antiquarian booksellers and slightly distant from the central Soho circuit. Managed by Nick Brown, a guitarist for post-punk outfit The Membranes – who scored some big indie hits back in the 80s and have been reunited for a successful gigging programme since 2009 – the store moved here nearly three years ago, after more than a decade on Portobello Road. Depending on when you pop by, you might find Nick or Claire Kalvis, who also works as a DJ on the international soul circuit, manning the shop. "Back in the day, if I or the other staff couldn't tell you how brilliant a record was, we felt we probably shouldn't stock it," Nick says. "These days, my musical tastes don't dictate what we sell, as people are much less partisan." Still, you get a sense that everything here has been quality-vetted and the soundtracks selection, in particular, is first-rate. I source an excellent copy of the rare soundtrack to the 1970s TV science-fiction spectacular *Space 1999*.

I also pick up a copy of Adam Faith's final Top 40 hit, 1965's *Someone's Taken Maria Away*. It was recorded with The Roulettes and it's truly criminal this proved to be curtains for his chart career. My adoration dates back to the early 80s when, dragged along to yet another dreary jumble sale, I briefly mistook his LP debut, *Adam*, for a new release from Martin Fry's ABC that I'd somehow missed. I was sold on jumble sales ever after. This is a near-mint copy of a single I don't have and it's mine for £4. Although it comes in a plain sleeve, one of the repro Parlophone singles that I source at my local record fair will soon make it look like it's fresh off the shelf.

Claire tells me you'll often find actors popping in before a show. Almost on cue, in walks Mark Gatiss

Nick sources his stock worldwide, buys collections from people who pop by and still enjoys hunting for new stuff. When we spoke, he'd not long returned from a holiday in Portugal where he picked up a stack of prog-rock records from a junk shop. He says punters are far more knowledgeable than they used to be. "People want to get the precise catalogue number – it's become a bit more like antique collecting – but there's as much fun to be had with it as there ever was. Some of my most exciting records only cost £5!"

Intoxica is situated right in the heart of theatreland and Claire tells me you'll often find actors popping in before a show. Almost on cue, in walks *Sherlock* and *Doctor Who*'s Mark Gatiss, who was appearing in *The Boys In The Band* just around the corner. Just before I exit stage-left, I sight a box of sale items. This yields a German 12" of M.C. Sar & The Real McCoy's *It's On You*. At £2.50, it's comfortably within my budget.

Before I make it to the street, I have to pass back through Pleasures Of Past Times, the adjacent collectors' emporium that offers a fantastic array of pop-and-rock memorabilia. The 23rd issue of *The Face* from March 1982, featuring Kim Wilde on the cover, just couldn't be abandoned to an uncertain fate and is rescued for £12.50. It takes a more resilient soul than I to get through this store without succumbing to temptation and, although it doesn't really stock much vinyl, it's well worth a visit in its own right. ●

The Trip

Getting there

All the stores are within a comfortable walk of each other, nestled just south of London's busiest shopping thoroughfare, Oxford Street. The capital's largest record shop – HMV, back in its original home by Bond Street Tube Station – is also nearby, with lots of vinyl. Head east for a cluster of exciting independents, and check markets for some interesting finds. For branches of my favourite London institution – Music & Goods Exchange, established in 1967 – head west on the Central Line to Notting Hill (15 minutes from Oxford Circus or Bond Street) or east to Greenwich; which is my local crate-digging spot, so leave those A-ha records alone!

PHIL (THE COLLECTOR) SWERN

THE SIX MILLION RECORD MAN

He has one of the biggest record collections in the world – some six to seven million tracks – has produced and written several UK and US smash hits, once had cucumber sandwiches with Jimi Hendrix, and even washed The Walker Brothers' and The Mamas & The Papas' hair (yes, we really said that). Oh, and he also writes questions for Radio 2's *Pop Master* quiz. **Andy Jones** enters the incredible world of Phil 'The Collector' Swern…

Phil Swern is disarmingly modest about his record collection. "I don't know if it's the biggest collection in the world, it's hard to say as there are so many collectors out there, but it is probably one of the biggest collections in Europe."

Mounted on a stage in an ex village hall, with huge movable units in which the records are kept – all temperature controlled and as secure as you can imagine – it is bigger than anything you or I have ever seen. It's simply massive. That's all there is to say. It's a bit like trying to describe the Grand Canyon. You can't.

The collection is now used as the backbone of a commercial music library called I Like Music – more on this later – an understated name for a business that prides itself on being able to provide a wealth of commercial music to clients including the BBC. It includes every Top 40 hit single since 1952, although that is just five per cent of the collection, as it turns out…

The first question is obvious, then: how many recordings does Phil own? "I have no idea," he laughs like it's the first time he's been asked that question. "All I can say is that the last time I counted them, there were just over 200,000 vinyl singles, 80,000 albums and getting on for 300,000 CDs. The problem is, that was many years ago. We reckon now that we have got six-and-a-half-to-seven-million titles."

Phil and his collection have been partners throughout his life and career. He started collecting records before he could read or write and consequently received them instead of toys as a child. Later, as we shall see, he worked for record labels, pluggers, studios, radio and TV shows and has become a master of pop-quiz questions. It's an amazing CV, but you might notice all of these jobs are linked not just by music, but also the fact they give Swern easier access to yet more records – and he would perhaps agree this was an important factor in his career choices so far. Phil has had some good fortune in this quest, as the gods of collecting really do seem to have smiled on him. Yet his understated modesty and ability to laugh at himself make every decision and every purchase easy to understand, even if you have just an ounce of a love for music and collecting.

"I decided to own every Top 40 hit ever released, and I did it. The aim was to get 'just' the singles, but think I might have all the albums now, as well…"

IT BEGINS

"I used to go around to my grandparents and was fascinated, as they had a radiogram and a pile of 78s," Phil recalls of 'the moment' the collecting began. "My grandfather bought me a wind-up gramophone for my third birthday and they gave me a pile of records. The party piece for my parents when they had guests was to ask me to put on, say, Perry Como singing *Dream Along With Me* and I'd do it, and everyone just

THE ULTIMATE QUIZZER?

Phil is now the master of pop-quiz questioning, so how does he think he'd do if the tables were turned? "Probably terribly and I will never do a pub quiz," he laughs. "I'm always asked by record companies or whatever to see if I'd take part, but never!"

Is that fear of failure, or is he scared he'd take over?

"It could go either way. You're damned if you do and damned if you don't. I don't think it would be good if it got around that I scored nothing, or on the other hand, it would be bad if people started saying it was a bit unfair, so I just avoid them and won't do it."

couldn't believe it, as this was before I could read or write!

"Growing up, I didn't want toy cars or aeroplanes or anything like that," he continues. "I just wanted records. My parents couldn't understand it. So on a Saturday, for a treat, if I was well behaved, they would try and get me come into the toy shop – but I wasn't interested. But funnily enough, I can't remember the first record I bought with my own money, as I was earning pocket money working at my grandparents' shop and just spending it on so many records. This was when I was nine or 10."

> "I EVEN KEPT WHAT I DIDN'T LIKE. I DON'T KNOW WHY. I'VE NEVER THOUGHT ABOUT WHY"

LET THERE BE... RECORDS

Swern's collection, then, was based on a continuation of his grandparents' collection and the easy-listening aspects of it. "I was buying things like Michael Holliday, but the first really poppy or rock 'n' roll record I bought was Sandy Nelson's *Let There Be Drums*. After that, I started buying Elvis Presley records and I guess the first thing that really made an impression, where I thought 'Oooh, that's different,' was *Move It* by Cliff Richard. It was on the radio all the time and I then started to discover more radio programmes, as there wasn't a lot to hear in the late 50s and early 60s. I got Radio Luxembourg, so got into Elvis Presley and Little Richard. That's when 'turn that bloody row off!' from my parents started…"

By his teens, the Phil Swern collection was already large, but he can't really put his finger on where the bug came from. "Well no one knows – my parents weren't really that interested in music and rarely played records, so maybe the obsession came from the milkman!" he laughs. "I just enjoyed having the physical record. I just got so excited going into a record shop back then and seeing all of the various records and just wanted them in my home. As the collection built up, I filed the records by label. So at the top left there was A&M and at the bottom right there was ZTT!"

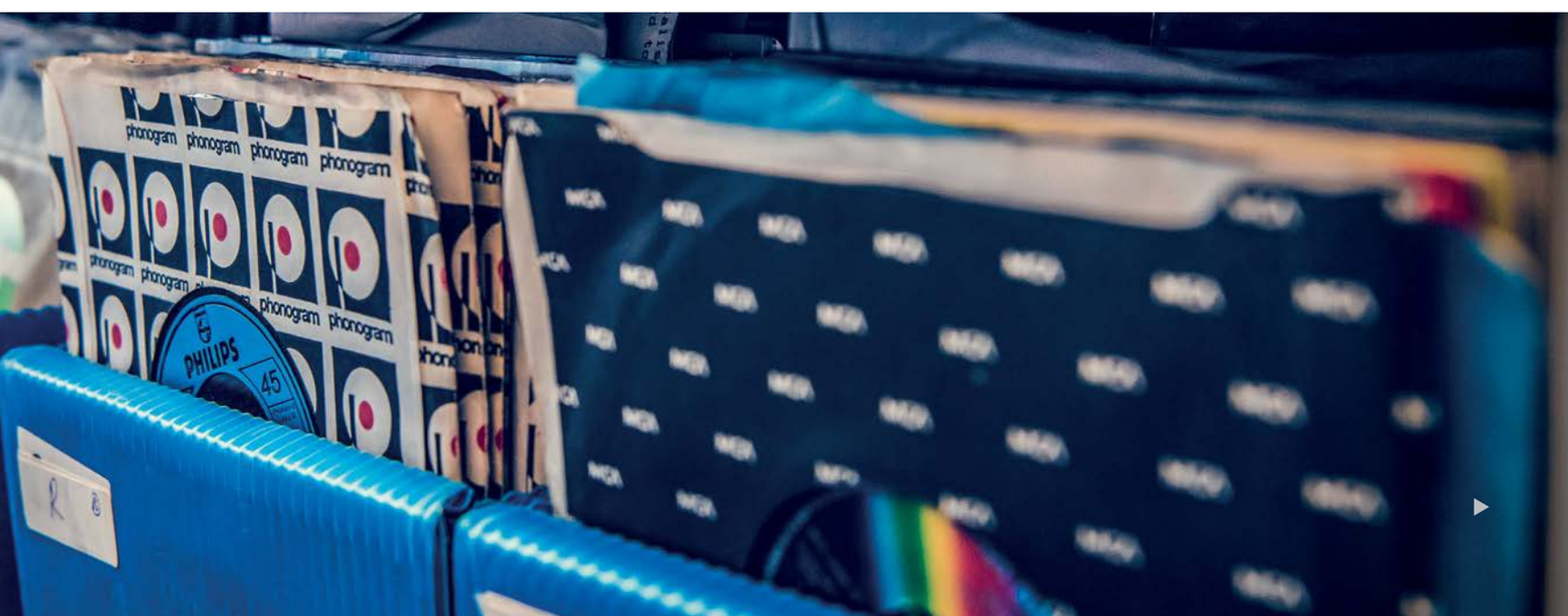
Fate would now deal its first blow in helping Swern's collection grow and also make a first connection with the BBC. "I was also fascinated by radio," he recalls. "So I'd write into the BBC and ask to get tickets for radio shows, programmes like *Easy Beat* – and I got to meet quite a few people. I also went to panel shows and there was one called *Many A Slip* which was introduced by a pianist and arranger called Steve Race, who happened to live a few doors away from me. One day, I went to one of the broadcasts and saw him coming out and plucked up the courage to introduce myself. When he found out where I lived, he offered me a lift home. I told him about my obsession with records and he said, 'Oh, I do this weekly programme on the BBC where I get masses of records sent in to me. I don't use them, so you can have what you want!' I thought, 'Oh my goodness, I've died and gone to heaven!'

"I went into his house and he said, 'There you go, there's the stuff that's come in in the last couple of weeks, help yourself!'

"I thought, 'Well I can't really,' so only took about four or five and he said, 'No, no, take more!' He said to drop by every couple of weeks and take as many as I wanted!"

PROPER JOB

Through Race, Phil met a young Johnny Beerling who would go on to be the controller at Radio 1 – and a connection that would help him in his future career as the two became good friends – but Swern was not BBC-bound just yet. At one time, he did think he'd make use of all of his records by becoming a DJ. "I built my own little studio in my bedroom with a mixer and two turntables and made my own little private shows." However, no one was to hear them just yet, as his parents stepped in to force Swern to choose a 'proper' career, one that would take him away from music, and at quite a tangent…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PHILIPS
45

"After I left school, I ended up hairdressing for three years, as my parents thought, 'This is ridiculous, you can't make a living from records'. I'd already applied to the record companies and the BBC but didn't get anywhere, so I went into hairdressing and worked for Vidal Sassoon for 18 months."

However, though his parents thought this a more suitable career, it didn't keep him away from collecting. "I was only a junior, but I met quite a few famous people because in the evening, quite a few of the stars came in to get their hair done. The Walker Brothers would come in and go down into the basement to get their hair done in private, and I'd wash their hair. I also washed Mama Cass' hair and she was my favourite customer. She would always ask if I would wash her hair and always gave me a five-pound tip, which was a lot back in 1969. So, when Mama Cass came in, I thought, 'Right, I'm going down the record shop soon!'"

LUCKY STRIKE

You now begin to realise that Phil's collection was almost destined to grow, and fate was gearing up for yet another intervention. "There was a lady who used to come in called Penny Valentine and she was the record reviewer for a magazine called *Disc And Music Echo*. I got on really well with her and used to wash her hair and moan all the time. One day, she came in and said, 'Look, there's a new record label called Strike Records that has started up and they

are looking for someone, but it won't be much of a job.' I said, 'Anything!' She rang them up and got me an interview, I went along and got the job as a runner, delivering tapes to studios and records to the BBC. Going around the BBC, I was meeting pluggers from other record companies and they would give me records, too. It was great!"

More records, more collecting, hello fate. Now the story takes a properly surreal twist…

"Strike Records' only real hit was *That's Nice* by Neil Christian, but they also had a really good artist called Roy Harper. They ran the place from a block of flats in Upper Berkeley Street in London and the flat beneath it was owned by Jimi Hendrix. One time I got back from delivering, I got in the lift and there was Jimi! He said to me, 'Hey man, do you work upstairs, because there's a new Roy Harper album that I know is coming out soon – any chance you can get me a copy?' So I ran upstairs, took a copy out of the cupboard and then went back and knocked on his door. He answered and said, 'Thank you so much, do you want to come in for a cup of tea?' I said 'I've got to get back…' so he said, 'Well, come back tomorrow at 3.30 and have tea with me.' So I did and he made cucumber sandwiches and tea and I ended up staying and chatting with Jimi Hendrix for half an hour…

> "JIMI HENDRIX MADE CUCUMBER SANDWICHES AND TEA. WE CHATTED FOR HALF AN HOUR"

"I was only 18 and thought, 'Oh my god, he's going to give me drugs,' or whatever," Swern continues. "But he was so gentle and quiet. We chatted about the blues and other music. He was lovely, but then I got told off when I got back to the office, because I'd been away for half an hour instead of a 15-minute tea break!"

NEW CAREER, MORE RECORDS

"At this point, I was still collecting everything and anything. I just liked records. I did like particular songs, but I even kept what I didn't like. I don't know why, I just did. In fact, I've never really thought about why. I knew the records I liked, filed away the ones I didn't like and thought, 'Maybe I'll come back to them and listen to them again one day,' but I never did. I still hung on to everything, though."

Strike Records went bust, but luckily, Phil moved with the team to RCA "for pretty much the same job – and I made lots of contacts there." He then moved to Transatlantic Records, and worked there for a year before landing another dream job.

"There was a sales manager there called Paul and we were always winding

I WANT THE MUSIC, NOT THE MONEY

Part of this magazine is, of course, about collecting vinyl and finding rare, valuable pressings – indeed, we covered The Most Valuable Vinyl Ever in our first issue. With Phil, however, while he does own the odd release that we rounded up ("*Street Fighting Man* by The Rolling Stones is quite valuable"), his collection is more about the music and completion rather than the cash and rarities. "A lot of the really valuable records are from the cutting room, where only a single copy or limited run was made," he says.

"I have a few, but have never really thought about owning really valuable records. But the collection is priceless, in a sense. I guess someone will buy it after I've gone, but it has to stay together."

WHAT TO DO WITH SO MANY RECORDS?

I Like Music is the company that Phil runs with Andy Hill. With Phil's collection and Andy's digital background, it's the perfect partnership…

PS "Andy had a company called Mars and started one of the first digital music companies in this country, supplying library music. A lot of his clients asked him for commercial music, but he didn't have the product, so we got together and started I Like Music. For several years, we quietly started digitising everything, starting with ABBA and finishing with ZZ Top and not telling anyone. And when we digitised the whole of the Top 40, it was too late for any other company to offer it. So when the BBC wanted a digital library, they put it out to tender about six or seven years ago and quite a number of companies bid for it and we were shortlisted. Then the BBC gave a list out asking for 30 to 40 titles – some were hits, some were quite well known but not hits and the rest were quite obscure. We supplied all but four and I don't think the nearest competitor came close. We won the contract, so now it's our library that they use.

"Every producer at the BBC has a computer on their desk and it's called the Desktop Jukebox. It has a BBC skin and looks like a BBC product, but it's our library – so basically, they type in, say, 'Madonna' and 'Holiday' and they can download it ready for broadcast. It's what they used to do with a library, go and pull out a record, play it and put it back. But now it's at their fingertips and they are PRS and PPL registered, so everything is accounted for.

"I Like Music provides music to lots of production companies. As well as the BBC's digital library, it also services ITV and a number of other major broadcasters. We also work with all sorts of independent production companies and people like London Transport. A lot of Underground stations are playing classical music. We supply that and there's been less violence on the platforms because people are more calm and relaxed."

each other up and playing pranks on each other. One day, the phone rang in my office and this American voice said, 'It's Jerry Moss here, from A&M Records,' and I said, 'Shut up, Paul,' and put the phone down. After it happened three times, I realised it really was him! He said they were setting up an independent UK operation and wanted me to work for it. So I did – it was a humungous amount of money, more than I could dream of and triple what I was earning at Transatlantic. The record collection grew faster and faster, especially after they sent me to LA and I discovered all the record shops over there. I was about 19 or 20 and had about 20,000 records at this time. They were all still in my bedroom in my parents' house!

"So I was working at A&M for a while and working on a record by Sonny Charles And The Checkmates called *Black Pearl*. I thought it was a great song, but too slow, so I decided to do a reggae version with the arranger Johnny Arthey who did *Young, Gifted And Black* – so we recorded it and it was our first Top 20 hit."

EVERY CHART HIT, PLEASE

From around 1973, Phil went on to write and produce dozens of hits by acts including The Pearls, R & J Stone, Blue Haze, Horace Faith, The Seashells, The Edwin Hawkins Singers, Duane Eddy and Manhattan Transfer. He also wrote and produced Polly Brown's big US Top 20 hit, *Up In A Puff Of Smoke*.

"I was doing quite well at this, but I was getting a little bored with the studio and production work," Phil recalls. "One of the big guys at A&M moved to Warner's in LA, so I went out there and they offered me a job. I remember thinking about it and turning it down when I got back home, as I really wanted to be in radio. Then I got a call from Johnny Beerling and he asked me to put together a music-quiz marathon for charity.

"It turned out it was a 32-hour-long quiz, with music clips for each question, so I put it together on reel to reel, one reel for every hour. It went like clockwork and they were thrilled and I thought I'd get a job with Radio 1 but, no, nothing!"

"However, another colleague of mine, Tim Blackmore, was head of programmes for Capital Radio and he was putting doing a programme called *You Ain't Heard Nothing Yet*, but he was about to end it as he didn't have enough wacky and strange records for it. I said, 'I could probably keep you going for another five series,' so I got involved in that. I was helping with the questions and getting annoyed if I didn't have a copy of something. I then spent a week with the *Guinness Book Of Hit Singles* and marked off the ones I didn't have and made it my task to get all of them!"

And so started Swern's ambition to get every Top 40 hit since the charts began in 1952… "It took an absolute age," he says of the collecting task. "In the end, if I went to a record fair and looked at something, they doubled the price as they knew I'd buy it, so I ended up taking friends along with me to buy the records! Initially, though, it was simple. I'd go to three or four record shops, like Beanos in Croydon which was brilliant, and I absolutely milked them – I'd pick up 30 or 40 at a time. Beanos eventually gave me the key to their stock room and said, 'There you go…'"

"I'd play each record once to make sure the quality was good enough," he adds. "I was never obsessive enough to get, say, the original pressing of a Buddy

LONG LIVE VINYL

POP QUIZ

Even though Phil doesn't like taking part in quizzes, we tried our own quickfire list of questions anyway. "5, 4, 3, 2, 1…"

Q What record do you return to again and again?
Stay With Me by Lorraine Ellison. It was never a hit in this country, but it did it for me.

Q And following on from that, what would you take to a desert island?
Certainly *Stay With Me* would be at the top of the list and *Morning Dew* by Tim Rose…

Q If a song's only available as a download, do you get it?
They don't excite me at all – I need something physical – but if it's the only way, then so be it!

Q Best record ever made?
River Deep – Mountain High.

Q Best band?
[Long pause] The Doobie Brothers.

Q Most overrated artist?
Wouldn't like to answer!

Q Most underrated?
Bobby Darin.

Q Best single
Born To Run by Bruce!

Q Best novelty record?
There isn't one. [Long pause] *Ernie*!

Q Best odd hit?
I'd go *Pop Muzik* by M.

Q The band that you'd like to have been a member of?
The Rutles [laughs].

Q The best question you've ever come up with?
Name the acts that have had a hit in every decade…

Q And the worst?
Loads. Too many to mention!

Q Best record that didn't make No. 1?
Vienna by Ultravox.

Q Which, actually made the BBC top of the chart of Best No. 2s…
I know, I compiled the chart!

THE VINYL VAULTS

After Phil left home, he had to buy a three-bed house just to store his collection ("in two rooms and a converted loft") and needless to say, his collection then again became part of his career… in an unlikely way. "We did a programme for Capital back before everything was digitised and it was broadcast from my house and called *The Vinyl Vaults*. Listeners could ring up and ask for any Top 40 hit and I'd have to find it on air. I'd run around mic'd up and they'd hear me huffing and puffing and trying not to swear." He makes it sound hard, but Phil was only beaten by the public twice in 26 weeks.

Holly record. I'd buy the original if I found it, but I'd rather get a good-quality copy. So I was just ticking them off my list. The late 50s and early 60s were tricky, as a lot of it only came out on 78. As the list got shorter and shorter, it became harder and harder to find the remainder. Sometimes, I'd pay up to £100 for a 45, but I didn't mind."

Phil completed the task at the end of the 90s and has since been on many record-company mailing lists, so the chart-compiling side of his purchasing is over. Perhaps somewhat ironically, his parents were key players in that final purchase… "I remember the last record I needed was Diana Decker's *Poppa Piccolino*. I eventually found it at a car-boot fair that my parents had dragged me along to. There was a man with a box of records that I flipped through and there it was – it was amazing. He wanted 90p for it and I offered him 50. I would have paid £90 if he'd asked me."

MASTER OF POP

Phil spent quite a while at Capital Radio and ended up working at Capital Gold with Richard Park from 1988 onwards, putting together the programmes on the station until one of the DJs, Roger Scott, moved to Radio 1 and asked Phil to come with him. Johnny Beerling offered Phil the chance to finally work at the BBC, where he looked after programmes like *Round Table* with Mike Read and Alan Freeman's *Pick Of The Pops*. "*Round Table* was the ultimate show for me to do, as I got every record sent to me by the record companies. I took it over and sped the show up considerably, because I wanted to get more records – it completely fed the habit!"

At Radio 1, Phil came up with the idea of *The Chart Quiz*: "Basically, taking the week's Top 20 and making a quiz about it," and also ran *Pop Of The Form*, so all the time, Phil's reputation as a master quiz-question compiler was growing.

"One of my oldest friends is Tony Blackburn," Phil says. "We go right back to the days of pirate radio. He was on a show called *Pop Score*, which was introduced by Pete Murray and then Ray Moore took over. Tony was the captain of one team and Terry Wogan the captain of the other. Tony asked me to go along one day and sit in the front row while they recorded two shows. Tony would ask me the answers to the questions, but then Terry Wogan realised what Tony was doing and kicked off and said, "Right, if he's going to sit close to Tony during this show, he'll sit close to me during the next'. This went on for more recordings until the producer Richard Wilcox came out, picked me up by the scruff of the neck and threw me out! I shouted after him, 'Don't worry mate, I'll have your job one day!' And sure enough, two years later, he rang me – we'd made up by this point – and said he was really busy and could I help out writing *Pop Score*, which I think Ken Bruce took over at that point. It was like a big *Archers* fan being asked to write the script – I was made up. I did it with Ken for a long time."

> "THE PRODUCER PICKED ME UP BY THE SCRUFF OF THE NECK AND THREW ME OUT!"

Phil then moved into the world of TV and worked for Channel 4 on *Pop The Question*, before returning to the BBC to help produce *That's Showbusiness*. "Then Ken was given the slot he does now on Radio 2 and they were looking to revamp it. We went out for lunch and came up with *Pop Master*." This daytime quiz has become huge in households and offices around the country. "Now I have a couple of helpers on it, as in the end, I just couldn't do it on my own. It's 20 questions a day with six music clips. I've been doing it for about 20 years now and we've written more than 90,000 questions with over 5,000 contestants."

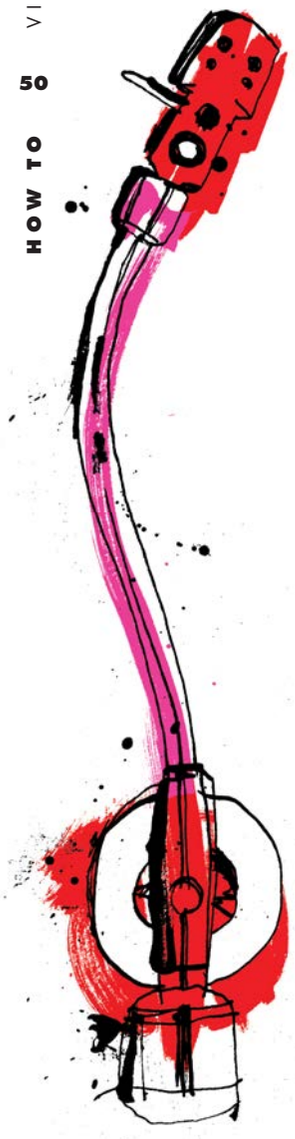
From collector to quiz expert, then, but the shadow of that collection still looms and the record shops still beckon. "I still enjoy listening to new music and I still go to record shops and still find things that I want. I guess I always will."

Phil will be appearing at *Popmaster Live* on 22 April at etc.venues, Bishopsgate in London. He'll be supplying some of the questions, but don't expect to see him on anyone's team… ●

VINYL CARE

Looking After Your Records

As wonderful as the format is, there are many potential hazards that could irrevocably ruin your discs, potentially wasting a lot of your money. **Andy Price** explores how best to store your discs to keep them safe and you smiling for decades to come…



Your records are priceless – not literally, of course, but in the sense that they represent hours of sonic bliss. However, there are still many people who might have been collecting for a while who don't keep their vinyl in a condition that will preserve its integrity and, indeed, may even be damaging, long-term. Newcomers, too, may find this physical 'looking after' of their music libraries a bizarre anachronism in 2017, but vinyl is a vintage format which, to get the best out of, requires specific care and attention.

In this feature, we're going to look more specifically at vinyl storage, an area we touched on last issue in our more broad 'looking after your records' feature which mainly focused on cleaning, dust removal and needle maintenance. You might find it a difficult pill to swallow, but how you store your records can have a massive impact on the resulting sound of the music and, in a worst-case scenario, could render your discs permanently unplayable. First off, to better understand the technology we're dealing with here, let's take a look at just what your records are made of – vinyl.

VINYL TAP

Music is transferred from the original master to a needle that etches a groove into a lacquer; this lacquer is then solidified and used to create the 'mother' record which is copied onto a stamp. This stamp is used on a mechanical press and repeatedly stamped into various polyvinyl chloride discs – it's way more flexible at this stage – before it's made harder by water.

Though this clearly sounds like a clunky, old-fashioned process established decades ago, it generally remains the record-creation method in use today, with modern pressings all created using, essentially, the same routine. Therefore, your 2017 released discs are just as prone to damage and breakage as your 1967 ones. With this in mind, it's important that whenever you handle your precious vinyl discs, you must ensure that you always touch them by the edges and never fondle the inner disc area where the grooves are, or you're increasing the chance of communicating dust, hair, crumbs or any other micro-particles you'll probably be carrying on your fingers to the disc.

Some might say that the resulting hiss, crackle and pop that you get from micro-particle contamination is part of the format's appeal – adding to the psychology of listening to music on record being a 'warm' fire-like experience.

While we don't particularly mind a bit of crackle on our records, we want to keep listening to them for decades to come and, if your discs are exhibiting too much erroneous sound, you should really consider giving them a clean. It's amazing how quickly the build-up of dust can start to affect the sound, with the contamination noise overpowering the sound of the tracks, particularly in quieter moments.

DUST TO DUST

Always put your records away after use: it's an old rule, but one which is frequently ignored and one that many might not realise is vital to a record's lifespan. Leaving your records on the turntable is a sure-fire way to get the grooves clogged with the dust that invisibly circulates around the rooms that people inhabit (we're pretty disgusting).

LEAVING YOUR RECORDS ON THE TURNTABLE IS A SURE-FIRE WAY TO GET THE GROOVES CLOGGED WITH THE DUST THAT INVISIBLY CIRCULATES AROUND INHABITED ROOMS

Another possible problem may be that if your record player faces direct sunlight and has been left out of its sleeve, then the heat throughout the day could cause significant damage. You just don't want to run the risk,

really, so to avoid all manner of possible problems, just treat your records as if they were holy relics – make sure that after each play you file the discs back in their sleeves.

Speaking of sleeves, you're going to need to consider that your record will come into contact with the protective inner sleeve more than any other surface in its life. Therefore, it's best to replace the older, paper, sleeves with either the thin plastic wallets (often these are found inside a traditional paper exterior) or a bulkier, dedicated protective sleeve.

There are myriad dangers with paper sleeves, particularly with older records: as the paper ages and its quality deteriorates, the surface becomes far coarser, acting like a harsh buffer to your precious, delicate discs.

There's also a danger that the glue used to put together the really old paper inner sleeves may have started to leak and/or change state, impacting on the surface of your record in a big way. We're really talking about 40-plus-year-old records here, though, so don't worry too much about this issue affecting your copy of Adele's *25*. But if you're planning on being in this for the long haul, then it pays to be aware.

Another note relevant to the battle against dust is something that perhaps many younger record collectors haven't had to do much of – and that's vacuuming! You should give the area around your record player and records a blast at least two times a week, though don't try to hand-vacuum your records yourself as this is just, well, a bit silly. You should also regularly be getting out a standard yellow duster and dusting above your speakers, below the needle and on the plate which your record spins on. We're constantly shedding hair and dead skin, so it's an ongoing fight.

SLEEVE NOTES

Even if you've replaced your sleeves with more forgiving plastic ones, you've no reason to be complacent. Dust is an insidious substance which, given time, will find its way into places you assumed were protected. So, with your vinyl collection, you're going to want to also consider specialist outer sleeves – these also protect the album's card sleeve, which contains the artwork (that's half the experience, right?). Outer

Illustration Ben Talon

WHICH IS WHICH?

HORIZONTAL STACKING
Though the terms can get confusing, what we mean by horizontal stacking is as in the image here, with the records being laid flat (eventually becoming a tower). We recommend you avoid storing records in this way

VERTICAL STACKING
Here, we're storing our records in an upright, vertical position. There are enough records in this writer's collection, so lean isn't an issue. It's also aesthetically pleasing and creates a visual talking point in your home

STORAGE SOLUTION
There are many alternatives to either towering stacks or long lines of records on your shelves. You can purchase IKEA-style smaller box shelving units, or you can get smaller dedicated storage boxes. This classic storage box has slats that prevent lean for smaller collections

Buyers' Guide

sleeves shouldn't be too heavy, as when they're stuck in your shelves, it's possible for them to become a little 'too' attached to the card sleeve, particularly in hotter temperatures.

DEATH FROM ABOVE

We think it's better to store your records in a 'stood up' vertical position instead of a flat horizontal stack. Yet we do concede there are dangers with both approaches.

With horizontal (piled up) storage, however, the weight and pressure on the records lower down the stack will eventually start to have an effect and possibly bend your records out of shape – and, in a worst-case scenario, all the records beneath the warped disc will start to pick up that same warp. Similarly, when your records are stood up vertically, ensure they're not leaning, for exactly the same reason. It's all about balancing the weight.

Another danger with horizontal stacking is the records lower down the pile will have all the residual dust and grime forced further into their grooves, with pressure from above also causing the peaks of the playing grooves to be compressed, leading to audible distortion. Be aware of the accumulated weight of your records, particularly if they're leaning. If they're too heavy, they may damage your shelving system.

Really, though, what we actually like to do is gawp at the size of our collections and the broad range of records we've collected. For that reason, vertical storage makes considerably more sense from a convenience point of view. So not only is it (arguably) a safer way to store your discs, but you can see the names of all your records and easily slide out/in your chosen LP without fear of a tower of records falling on top of you! ●

INNER SLEEVES

It's important to eliminate the static build-up that leads to dust contamination, even when your records are stored away. Therefore, dedicated anti-static LP inner sleeves are vastly preferable to the awkwardness of paper. AnalogueWorks' packs of 50 will only set you back around £15. Essential…

OUTER SLEEVES

Though your inner sleeves are considerably more important, you do want to protect the whole record – card sleeve and all – if you're truly dedicated to record collecting. Outer sleeves are another layer of insulation from the outside world. The clear one pictured here is by Vinyl Guru and a pack of 20 will set you back £15.99.

NEVER MIND THE KALLAX

We here at *Long Live Vinyl* like to proudly display our collections – therefore, a decent-sized set of storage shelves is a necessity. The IKEA Kallax pictured here will set you back around £115 and features a series of square shelves that not only help to prevent lean on smaller collections, but look pretty stylish, too. They're now an established go-to solution for those whole like to showcase their record-collecting lifestyle and they come in a range of sizes and designs.

ICUBE

Speaking of storage solutions, the iCube (i-cubes.co.uk) provides a simple, effective and also mobile storage solution. You can get a few of these stackable cubes which start at £30 (the price varies with the size) and gradually build your collection cube-by-cube, while also allowing you to take a few out and about with you without having to take the records out of your home storage unit. They look pretty cool, too.

CLASSIC POP PRESENTS

POPMASTER LIVE!

WITH KEN BRUCE

"CAN YOU SPOT A DEPECHE MODE OR DEAD OR ALIVE INTRO IN SECONDS?"

"COULD YOU NAME THE GROUP THAT FOUND A *RAT IN MI KITCHEN*?"

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THE ESSENTIAL

Pink Floyd

Our exploration of the vinyl catalogues of the most important artists in the history of music continues with a band that, we feel, everyone should own at least one record by – the legendarily innovative Pink Floyd

One of the most inventive and groundbreaking bands in the history of popular music, Pink Floyd's output has frequently sought to challenge established musical norms and explore high-concept, grand themes. When viewed as a whole, the collective work of David Gilmour, Roger Waters, Richard Wright, Nick Mason and, of course, the prodigious Syd Barrett, established a benchmark for just what an album could be.

It goes without saying that the best way to experience the Floyd is through soaking up their albums in their entirety, enjoying some of the most immaculately crafted track sequencing of all time. And what a feast of richness their back catalogue contains: whether it's dismantling the social architecture of the country in *The Wall*, the Orwellian capitalist critique of *Animals*, reflections on the pressures of an increasingly greedy music industry on *Wish You Were Here* and, of course, their captivating early work with creative lynchpin Syd Barrett. His unfortunate psychological breakdown would later be artistically processed on the 1975 opus *The Dark Side Of The Moon* – a contender for the greatest record ever made.

Yes, Pink Floyd (much like last issue's featured artist, David Bowie) have gone through some quite significant changes. Understandably, there are many who favour particular eras over others: the psychedelic, often-chaotic whimsy and wit of the Barrett era has its devotees, as does the, slightly more 'conventional', David Gilmour directed late-80s period.

But for our money, their real creative peak was during the 1970s to mid 80s, under the auspices of the multi-skilled Roger Waters who, while also serving as the bassist, creatively captained the band through the most fascinating and critically revered period, coming up with most of the lyrical and musical themes at the heart of their most celebrated records.

THE VINYL CUT

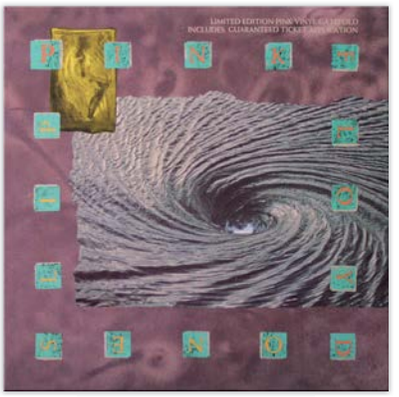
We're going to be exploring 40 vinyl records listed in order of quality (ie, which you should prioritise purchasing). While some of the initial 10 to 15 entries are curios and seldom-heard single releases – and sometimes not the band's best work – they are often worth a punt for collecting. We're just scratching the surface here – there are probably hundreds of variants of many of the early singles, here represented by the finest example of Barrett's songcraft: *Arnold Layne*.

We also have the most recent versions that you're most likely to discover in your local HMV and the rarest versions with pricing for both, though bear in mind that the pricing of the rare versions will change depending on their condition.

40 THE DOGS OF WAR 1988

1988 single *The Dogs Of War* is a repetitive, somewhat teenage whinge about warmongering governmental oppression which, after Roger Waters' vastly more sophisticated treatise on the same subject in *The Final Cut*, feels unnecessary. It's a bit of a painful listen, with an overtly dramatic, heavy arrangement weighed down by some of the most boring synth sounds ever recorded. Consistently voted the worst Floyd record, it's for collectors only.

Latest 1988: CBS 651615 7 **£5**
Rarest 1988: CBS (Australian sealed mint) **£40**



39 ONE SLIP 1988

This more conventional-sounding *Momentary Lapse Of Reason* single was co-written by one-time Roxy Music guitarist Phil Manzanera (though he doesn't appear on this single or the album). It's a pretty weak single next to the classic Floyd canon, but it's an interesting attempt at dragging the now Gilmour-helmed band into a more chart-friendly zone. The B-side has the more interesting *Terminal Frost* from the same album and a live version of previous single *The Dogs Of War*.

Latest 1988: EMI EMG 52 **£10**
Rarest 1988: EMI (European release with poster) 14 2026356 **£170**

30 TONITE LET'S ALL MAKE LOVE IN LONDON 1968

This seldom-heard audiovisual document of the swinging London scene's 1967 peak features not just early Floyd, but interview snippets with Julie Christie, Mick Jagger and a variety of other key figures from the pop culture of the time. The true Pink Floyd sustenance here is a riveting, if over-long, version of *Interstellar Overdrive* and the rarer Mason-penned *Nick's Boogie*.

Latest 1990: For Miles Records SEE 258 **£15** *Rarest* 1968: Instant (first press mint) INLP 002 **£300**

36 NILE SONG 1969

This hard-rocking, *More*-era track was released as a single in France, Japan and New Zealand and features only Gilmour, Waters and Mason. Being conspicuous on the parent album, *The Nile Song* was an attempt to move away from the band's Barrett-era psychedelia. The riff-heavy sonic onslaught would be the heaviest thing the band recorded until sessions for *The Wall*; B-side *Ibiza Bar* also finds Gilmour and Waters cranking up the volume.

Latest 1969: Harvest 2C006-04506M **£30-50** *Rarest* 1969: Columbia DNZ (New Zealand pressing) 10663 **£270**

34 WORKS 1983

Released in 1983 by former American label Capitol, this compilation was designed to compete with studio album *The Final Cut* and features tracks from across the history of the band until that point, of particular note is *Ummagumma* outtake *Embryo* which had been a live favourite for years, as well as alternate stereo mixes of *Brain Damage* and *Eclipse* to reel in the completists. Aside from those points of note, it's a largely forgettable, clearly hastily assembled compilation.

Latest 1983: Capitol Records ST-12276 **£5** *Rarest* 1988: Toshiba-EMI (Japanese white-label promo) EMS-81600 **£100**

37 ON THE TURNING AWAY 1987

This highlight from the disappointing *A Momentary Lapse Of Reason* became a live staple and was a single in December 1987. However, a soaring vocal performance from David Gilmour can't rescue the track from a now somewhat dated production, yet the gospel choirs add an interesting sonic experience. Initially ignored by many, the song has grown in stature due to the frequency of live performances over the years.

Latest 1987: EMI EM 34 **£5** *Rarest* 1987: EMI (misprint error, choral music on A side) EM 34 **£100**

33 A NICE PAIR 1973

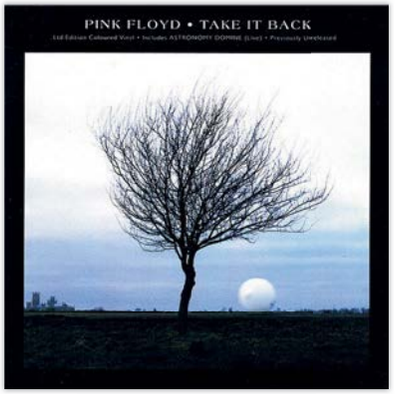
A grouping of the band's first two LPs assembled in 1973 following the surge in interest garnered by *The Dark Side Of The Moon*. *A Nice Pair* is indeed a good value-for-money package; however, true devotees will certainly already own these two pivotal studio albums. There are some key differences between the US and UK editions, with the US edition bizarrely replacing the studio cut of *Astronomy Domine* with the live version from *Ummagumma*.

Latest 1983: Capitol Records SABB-11257 **£20** *Rarest* 1973: Capitol Records (mint, sealed) **£150**

32 ZABRISKIE POINT 1970

Recorded in winter 1969, following the release of *Ummagumma*, this project was originally intended to be (as with *More* and *Obscured By Clouds*) a complete soundtrack to the controversial, countercultural Michelangelo Antonioni film of the same name. The band completed eight tracks for the movie, but in the end, only three were actually used, the director preferring tracks from the edgier side of pop.

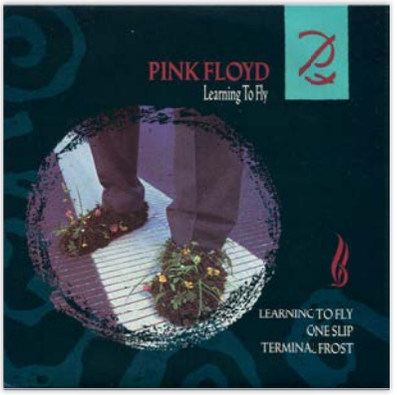
Latest 2013: WaterTower Music – WTM39474 **£20** *Rarest* 1970: MGM (first pressing) CS-8120 **£350**



32 TAKE IT BACK 1994

The first single from 1994's *The Division Bell* is dominated by David Gilmour's distinctive guitar sound and a vocal style that recalls his approach on earlier, better, material. Although the latterly released *High Hopes* stands as *…Bell*'s finest single, the B-side here is intriguing: a live version of *Astronomy Domine*, the storming Syd Barrett track stemming back to the pre-Gilmour days which features some impressive guitar work, though Barrett is sadly no longer present.

Latest 1994: EMI EM 309 **£15** *Rarest* 1994: Columbia (Brazilian 12" blue disc) 51.6282 **£170**



31 LEARNING TO FLY 1987

A drastic departure from the established sounds of the band, the first single from *A Momentary Lapse Of Reason* clearly attempts to establish a new direction. Inspired by Gilmour's burgeoning interest in flying, the floaty *Learning To Fly* has a more poetic lyrical approach which adds to the sense of change and stands in stark contrast to the politically charged cynicism of Waters. It's a song that divides the fanbase.

Latest 1987: EMI EM 26 **£10** *Rarest* 1987: CBS/Sony (Japanese picture sleeve) 07SP 1060 **£100**

28 POINT ME TO THE SKY 1968

Many collectors consider this little-heard early Waters and Gilmour co-write the Holy Grail of long-lost singles. A single that failed to chart in the UK, it remains a valuable piece of Floyd history. B-side *Careful With That Axe, Eugene* would fare better, becoming a signature tune of the band. The single was intended to be a standalone, but following its chart failure, the band lost interest in releasing singles in the UK.

Latest 1968: Columbia: DB 8511 **£50-£80** *Rarest* 1968: Columbia (Egypt 'Pink Floid' missprint) DB 8511 **£1,000**

33 A COLLECTION OF GREAT DANCE SONGS 1981

This hilariously named compilation actually features some of the least danceable tunes in the Pink Floyd ouvre, with the exception of the funk-tastic *Another Brick In The Wall (Part II)* and a re-recorded version of rock-disco friendly *Money*. Released in 1981, this is an odd compilation: it's got two epic 10-minute-plus tracks, *Sheep* and *Shine On You Crazy Diamond* taking up most of it.

Latest 1981: Harvest SHVL 822 **£15** *Rarest* 1982: Columbia (American mint sealed) **£100-£150**

29 TOUR '75 1975

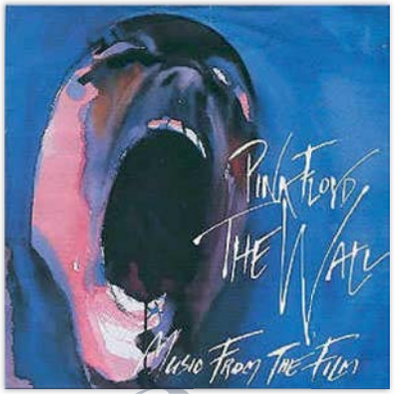
It might appear to be a bootleg upon first glance but it was actually an officially sanctioned release, put together in the US to generate interest in pre- *Dark Side…* material. It also aimed to entice new fans who'd seen the band on their 1975 tour to purchase more of the back catalogue. Weirdly enough, it features only two live tracks, *Astronomy Domine* and *Careful With That Axe, Eugene* (the same live versions from *Ummagumma*). The rest are, surprisingly, studio tracks.

Latest 1975: Capitol Records SPRO 8116/7 **£80** *Rarest* 1975: Capitol Records (mint condition) **£300**

27 NOT NOW JOHN 1983

The Final Cut's only single release, the driving, rocky *Not Now John* – ironically – is the only track on the Roger Waters-dominated album to feature David Gilmour on lead vocals (though Waters sings the refrains). Lyrically, it concerned Waters' disgust at Thatcherism, the Falklands War and the post-war power struggles. The controversial lyrics 'fuck all that' were amended to 'stuff all that', while the B-side has a slightly different version of album cut *The Hero's Return*.

Latest 1983: Harvest HAR 52244 **£5** *Rarest* 1983: CBS Sony (Japanese promo) XDSP 93036 **£500-£800**



22 WHEN THE TIGERS BROKE FREE 1982

A post-*Wall* standalone single (though it later appeared in the movie version), *When The Tigers Broke Free* prefigures the autobiographical *The Final Cut* with Waters lyrically evoking the death of his father Eric Fletcher in the Battle Of Anzio during World War II. The orchestral backing adds to the emotional weight of this marvellous, oft-forgotten, funereal track. The song was rejected from the *The Wall* for being, legend has it, too 'personal'.

Latest 1982: Harvest HAR 5222 **£10**
Rarest 1982: CBS (mint New Zealand pressing) BA 222 968002 **£250**

24 US AND THEM/TIME 1974

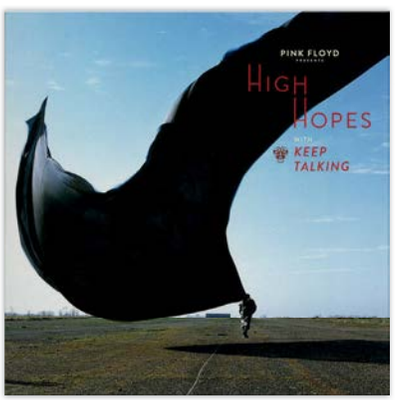
These pivotal standouts from *The Dark Side Of The Moon* received a US single release in 1974. The glorious *Time* features a sound collage of antique clocks before launching into a Gilmour-sung verse, while the serene, pretty *Us And Them* features some alluring saxophone and one of the most graceful melodies Pink Floyd ever recorded. Though it wasn't released as a single in the UK, it's still findable easily online.

Latest 1974: Harvest 3832 **£10**
Rarest 1974: Harvest (Promo EP featuring *Breathe/Money*) 6746 **£50**

23 COMFORTABLY NUMB 1980

The Wall's standout moment and a song that would become one of the band's signature songs, *Comfortably Numb* was released as a US single in 1980: well after the release of *The Wall*. Featuring Gilmour's finest solo and a simply gorgeous arrangement, *Comfortably Numb* is a work of genius and is among the band's finest compositions. The song would be the final one performed by the reformed band at 2005's Live 8.

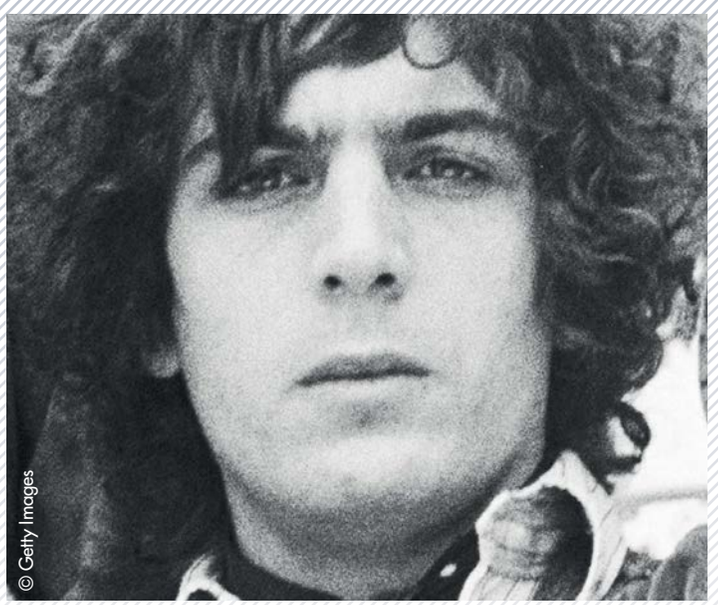
Latest 2011: EMI 5099902703473 **£20**
Rarest 1980: CBS (Japanese first press) 07SP491 **£190**



21 HIGH HOPES 1994

A fan favourite, this Gilmour song closed 1994's *The Division Bell*, with lyrics that inspired the album's title (and 2014's *The Endless River*). The song reflects nostalgically on Gilmour's early days, leaving his 'greener, brighter, sweeter' hometown behind and the journey to becoming an adult. It can also be read as being reflective of the journey of Pink Floyd as a band, though Gilmour has remained aloof on the subject. It's certainly the best thing on *The Division Bell*.

Latest 1994: EMI United 7243 8 81772 7 **£25** *Rarest* 1987: EMI (limited French pressing) 881839-7 **£200**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The Acetate Debate

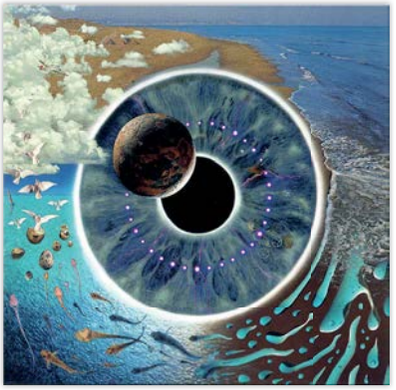
Recorded by the young Barrett, Waters and co (then called The Tea Set), an unofficially distributed acetate allegedly sold on eBay for a frankly astonishing $25,000 (£20,022). This controversial studio acetate features rhythm-and-blues standard *King Bee* backed by an early Syd Barrett composition, *Lucy Leave* and indeed, if real, would certainly fetch a fair price. However, many in the Floyd collecting community doubt its existence, with many suspecting the buyer to have been sold a cheap fake. The jury is out… though, however, we must stress that it's better to get the perspective of collectors and experts before buying any acetates – so put away that 20 grand!

UNRELEASED

22 ECHOES – THE BEST OF PINK FLOYD 2001

This 2001 compilation was another big smash and served as many young music fans' introduction to the Floyd canon. It's a selective retrospective, omitting material from four of their transitional albums and heavily focusing on the classic records, the Gilmour era and an assortment of Barrett-era tracks. This compilation naturally segues from one track to another but it does feel like a very airbrushed, edited version of history.

Latest 2001: EMI 536 1111 **£50** *Rarest* 2001: EMI (mint condition) 536 1111 **£200**



21 PULSE 1995

Capturing the Gilmour-era band live during the 1994 tour in support of *The Division Bell*, *Pulse* is an interesting live album, containing a complete live version of *The Dark Side of the Moon*. However, because of the live show's reliance on ostentatious visuals, the music was required to be slavishly sequenced to correspond, therefore some of these live arrangements sound a little bit less exciting and dynamic than their studio counterparts. The four-disc vinyl version is quite a tricky find.

Latest 1995: EMI EMD 1078 (4x vinyl boxset) **£200** *Rarest* 1995: EMI EMD 1078 (in mint condition) **£850**

20 A MOMENTARY LAPSE OF REASON 1987

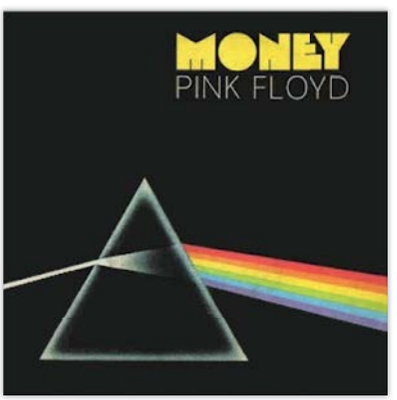
If 1983's *The Final Cut* was a Roger Waters solo album in all but name, then this, the first record of the post-Waters era, is inarguably a David Gilmour record. With this in mind, it's difficult to not find tracks like the synth-heavy *Dogs Of War* and the bass-heavy *One Slip* colossally disappointing. Though there's still plenty to enjoy if you see past the overwrought, dated production, such as the two-part *A New Machine*.

Latest 2016: Pink Floyd Music – B01DSV6XQW **£20** *Rarest* 1987: Columbia (sealed US first edition) **£400**

2016 Remasters

Throughout 2016, the self-contained Pink Floyd Records label has reissued the vast majority of the remastered back catalogue on pristine 180g heavyweight vinyl. *The Final Cut* and *A Momentary Lapse Of Reason* were released in January of this year. The gorgeously reproduced records feature all the original inserts and special care has clearly been given to guarantee that all is at is was. If you're just getting into Pink Floyd-collecting on vinyl, then these sparkling new mixes, back on the format they belong on, represent the definitive way to hear the band's music.

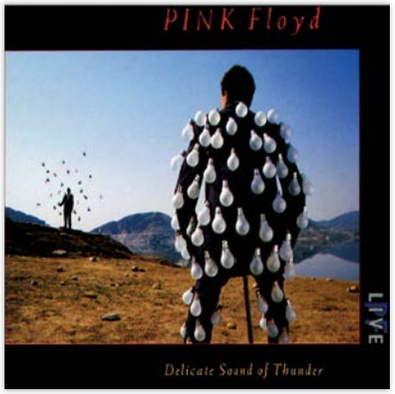
BOXSETS



19 MONEY 1973

Though not issued as a single in the UK, *Money* would be their best performing single to date over in the US, hitting No.13 on the Billboard Top 100 and, ironically, becoming a lucrative smash hit. The odd-time signature and sublime, danceable bass riff are part of the reason, as is the unusual sound-collage rhythm featuring ripping money, tills, and the jangle of coins. A more conventional, reined-in arrangement guaranteed radio-friendly appeal.

Latest 2003: EMI Capitol Special Markets – 72438-58884-7-2 **£40** *Rarest* 1973: Harvest (Danish picture sleeve) 6C 006-05368 **£540**



18 DELICATE SOUND OF THUNDER 1988

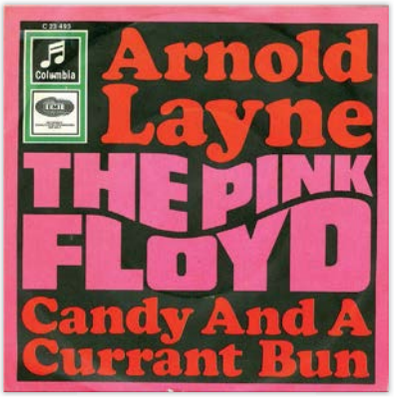
This live double album captures latter-era Floyd's huge, visually impressive 1987/88 world tour, very much an attempt to placate those former fans who may have feared the band they knew and loved were transforming into a very different beast under the captainship of Gilmour. The record therefore is full of tracks from the golden era, but without the aforementioned visual context, the record suffers.

Latest 1988: EMI EQ 5009 **£20**
Rarest 1988: EMI EQ 5009 (first press, sealed) **£60**

16 RELICS 1971

Though technically a compilation, *Relics* is a rewarding listen. It contains the vital early Floyd singles *Arnold Layne* and *See Emily Play*; so throw in a smattering of B-sides and key album tracks from the first three studio albums and arguably, you have the definitive document of Syd Barrett-era Pink Floyd. However, the most rewarding vinyl experiences remain Pink Floyd's albums proper and the track sequencing isn't the journey through moods the debut album provides.

Latest 1997: EMI 7243 8 59862 1 5 **£20**
Rarest 1971: Odeon (Japanese red wax version) OP80261 **£250**



14 ARNOLD LAYNE 1967

The very first single released by Pink Floyd is archetypal Syd Barrett. Lyrically concerning a transvestite with a penchant for thieving women's clothes from washing lines, Arnold Layne is also quintessentially English, with Barrett's whimsical lyrics a huge inspiration to generations of British songwriters, even well into the 90s. Backed by fan favourite *Candy And A Currant Bun*, it remains highly sought after; the European picture-disc releases can fetch a pretty penny.

Latest 1967: Columbia 7" – DB 8156 **£20**
Rarest 1988: Columbia (demo with promo picture sleeve) **£2,500**

17 THE ENDLESS RIVER 2014

2014's unexpected final studio album consists entirely of instrumentals and elaborate soundscapes. The death of Floyd's keyboard player Richard Wright in 2008 undoubtedly informed the approach to this record, featuring as it does much material that Gilmour and Wright created together when making *The Division Bell*. Aside from those tracks co-written with Wright, Mason and Gilmour are the only original Floyd members to appear.

Latest 2014: Parlophone – B00NPZJTNG **£20**
Rarest N/A

15 OBSCURED BY CLOUDS 1972

Though ostensibly a full-length soundtrack to the 1972 French film *La Vallee*, *Obscured By Clouds* is universally regarded as a Floyd album proper. Because the compositions, particularly the instrumentals, were written with visuals in mind, it can get a bit languid and, well, a little bit dull at times. However, there's still gold to be found here such as *The Gold It's In The…* and Gilmour's *Childhood's End*, an underrated gem.

Latest 2016: Pink Floyd Music – B01DSV6WR2 **£20** *Rarest* 1972: Harvest (test pressing) – SHSP 4020 **£700**

19 MORE 1969

The first post-Barrett project finds Pink Floyd struggling to find a new musical identity, though this does lead to quite an absorbing, hypnotic listening experience touching on a range of genres. Conceived as a soundtrack for the under-seen bohemian flick of the same name, *More* finds Roger Waters striving to redefine the Floyd as something more innovative and stimulating, with key tracks being the rocky *The Nile Song* and the simply stunning *Cymabaline*.

Latest 2016: Pink Floyd Music – B01EW1UMLO **£30** *Rarest* 1969: Columbia (test pressing) SCX 6346 **£2,000**

12 ANOTHER BRICK IN THE WALL (PART II) 1979

The children of Islington Green School's finest moment (and one which they demanded more royalties for), *The Wall*'s most peculiar, but contagious moment was released as a single in November 1979. Producer Bob Ezrin's inspired suggestion to add a disco beat to this anti-authoritarian diatribe undoubtedly added to the enduring appeal of the most chilling No. 1 in chart history.

Latest 2008: Columbia (US collectables 7" reissue) 13-03118 **£4** *Rarest* 1979: EMI (Kenya pressing 7") – EMI-5011 **£500+**

11 THE DIVISION BELL 1994

We're getting into proper studio-album territory now, with the Gilmour-helmed *The Division Bell* being the latter-era LP of note. Though quite some way from standing among the lofty heights of Waters-era Floyd records, *The Division Bell* is by no means a bad LP, with *High Hopes* being perhaps the strongest post-Waters Floyd composition. *…Bell* deals with themes of communication and the disconnect between Waters and Gilmour.

Latest 2016: Pink Floyd Music – B00KBNRXXS **£30** *Rarest* 1994: EMI (first pressing) EMD 1055 7243 8 28984 1 2 **£350**

10 UMMAGUMMA 1969

The band's fourth offering was intended to be the complete Pink Floyd experience: an all-new studio album as well as a live album containing a selection of notably electrifying performances from gigs around the country. While the live element of the record is a fascinating historical document (despite containing just four tracks), the studio record – containing tracks principally composed by each member of the band in turn, is frequently ignored.

Latest 2016: Pink Floyd Music – B01DSV6W68 **£30** *Rarest* 1969: Odeon (rare Japanese promo, red disc) OP-8912-13 **£1,500**

Top five rarest Pink Floyd records

RAREST RECORDS

5 DARK SIDE OF THE MOON
Blue triangle
£400-£800

Perhaps the best-known Pink Floyd rarity, the original first edition was pressed by The Gramophone Co. Ltd by EMI and features an iconic blue triangle on the record label. At one point, these were highly sought after but after it became an established 'rarity', many more of these started turning up. We've listed it here to reference its importance to Floyd collectors, however. A mint first pressing can fetch upwards of £400.

4 WISH YOU WERE HERE
Sealed UK first issue
£1,775

When *Wish You Were Here* was originally released, the LP came wrapped in black shrink wrap, hiding the wonderful cover art and bewildering casual record buyers. Shortly after, stickers with the band and album title were sent to record shops up and down the country so people would know what they were buying. In 2012, an unopened original copy sold for £1,775. The seller stated the record 'really isn't supposed to be opened or played'.

3 ARNOLD LAYNE
UK 7" demo with picture sleeve
£2,800

Roughly only 500 copies of this demo version of *Arnold Layne* were produced in 1967, though never commercially released, featuring a hyperbolic picture sleeve proclaiming 'This is it!… the next projected sound of '67'. A mint version of this rarity recently sold at auction for over £2,800. This early version of the most quintessential Syd Barrett song remains a highly collectable, massively desirable purchase for the Floyd collector.

2 A SAUCERFUL OF SECRETS
Rare first export
£2,995

A mint-condition copy of this version of the Floyd's second proper LP is listed online for sale at a staggering £2,995. It was apparently common practice in the late 60s to set aside a few copies of the domestic UK pressing for export to other territories. This version, with its original UK Odeon labels, was one that was sent to the United States and is impossibly hard to get hold of, going some way to justifying its weighty price tag.

1 MEDDLE
US Blue Vinyl
£8,500

This beautiful blue-coloured disc version of 1971's sublime *Meddle* is almost impossible to find, with copies in numerous states of quality regularly selling for between £8,000 and £9,000. The US blue disc version was released by Columbia with catalogue number 11903, though there's a very limited quantity of them in existence. So our advice to you would be that if you do manage to find one, then hang on to it, as the price seems to be skyrocketing.

9 A SAUCERFUL OF SECRETS 1968

The second LP from Pink Floyd suffered from a difficult gestation: it was during this time that Barrett's increasingly problematic mental-health issues became too much to deal with and he left the band, while Barrett's old schoolfriend David Gilmour joined to cover some of the cracks. So, a momentous record from the perspective of history, it's also, occasionally, an enthralling listen (and the only record to feature all five Pink Floyd members). Despite Barrett's condition, his magical influence pervades the record, with the mesmerising closer *Jugband Blues* serving as a fitting finale from the once-effervescent frontman.

Latest 2016: Pink Floyd Music – B01DSV6VYQ £20
Rarest 1968: Odeon (rare first export) PSCX6258 £3,000

7 THE FINAL CUT 1983

Floyd's oft-forgotten and underrated masterpiece, *The Final Cut* is Roger Waters' final work with Pink Floyd and, suitably, the most dominated by his creative presence. Some critics have gone so far as to dub this record a Waters' solo album and not a 'proper' Floyd album at all… Despite this, it's a searing, exquisite record with reflective, nostalgic lyrics dealing with Waters' soldier-father's death in World War II and the banality of conflict itself. Tracks such as the moving *Post War Dream* and *The Wall*-referencing *Your Possible Pasts* are wonderful, if gloomy, compositions – as an album, it deserves re-evaluation.

Latest 2016: Pink Floyd Music – B01DSV6XIU £20
Rarest 1983: Columbia (sealed first edition) – QC38243 £50

8 ATOM HEART MOTHER 1970

Surprisingly, Pink Floyd's very first No. 1 album in the British album charts was amongst their most avant-garde works. *Atom Heart Mother* is a tricky listen initially for any newcomer to the band, and shows all the hallmarks of clichéd prog indulgence (Side 1's 23-minute-long orchestral piece is a particular slog). However, stick with it until Side 2, where an assortment of (quite different) compositions starts to provide immense sonic gratification. The 12-minute *Alan's Psychedelic Breakfast* contains some wonderful moments and Waters' *If* signposts greater things to come…

Latest 2016: Pink Floyd Music – B01DSV6WL8 £20
Rarest 1970: Odeon (Japanese red vinyl) OP-80102 £400-£500

6 MEDDLE 1971

A record that captures the band mid-transition from the kaleidoscopic lunacy of the Syd Barrett-led era to the more refined, artistic articulations that would define the band for generations to come. *Meddle* is a curious beast, with lyrical contributions from all the band and an unclear central theme. That being said, the gorgeous *One Of These Days* is a career standout, though the record finds the band seemingly self-engrossed (particularly Side 2's *Echoes* suite), it's not quite as indulgent as the band's previous offering *Atom Heart Mother* and rewards repeated listens mightily.

Latest 2016: Pink Floyd Music – B01DSV6WZO £20
Rarest 1971: Columbia (blue disc, mint) – 11903 £4,000-£8,500

5 THE PIPER AT THE GATES OF DAWN 1967

The only album-proper to be conceived under the direction of Syd Barrett, Pink Floyd's debut stands apart quite distantly from much of the rest of the oeuvre: though to many, this era of Pink Floyd is still a preferable listening experience to the more cerebral post-Barrett works. The debut contains many innovative songs, the psychedelic art-rock of *Interstellar Overdrive* and the glorious madness of opener *Astronomy Domine*. Despite the difference in tone to the rest of the canon, it's still a compulsory purchase for every Floyd fan.

Latest 2016: Pink Floyd Music – B01EW1UM5A **£30**
Rarest 1967: Columbia Records (mono first press) – SX 6157 **£700**

3 ANIMALS 1977

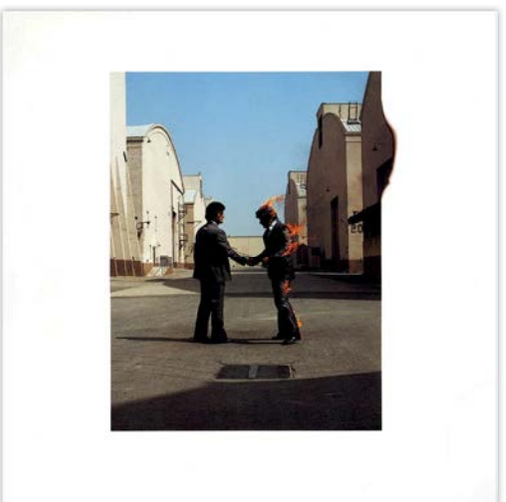
The record that gave Battersea Power Station timeless rock 'n' roll kudos, *Animals* is one of Pink Floyd's most captivating records and arguably the darkest and most pointed political, anti-capitalist statement the band had made until that point. Though shrouded in grim, transparently Orwellian lyrical imagery, the music contained within the album's *Dogs/Pigs* and *Sheep* suites is among the finest they ever committed to tape. *Dogs* in particular features some sublime, textured Gilmour riffery, while Richard Wright's humming, portentous synth adds to the LP's ominous vibe. The fans' favourite.

Latest 2016: Pink Floyd Music B01DSV6XGC **£20**
Rarest 1977: Pathe Marconi (French pink disc) 2C06898434Y **£100**

1 THE WALL 1979

This colossal, sprawling double album is one of Pink Floyd's most iconic records, not least because the overt concept record was later reinterpreted as a visually provocative movie. The double album represents a superb experience on vinyl, with the descent into chaos of the tragic protagonist (aptly named 'Pink Floyd') via tracks such as *In The Flesh?*, sexual confusion in *Young Lust* and the sublime *Comfortably Numb* adding up to a first-rate Floyd collection. The three-part, school-choir incorporating *Another Brick In The Wall* yielded the famous UK chart No.1 which won the band another legion of fans.

Latest 2016: Pink Floyd Music – B005NNYL54 **£30** *Rarest* 1979: Harvest (Italian limited-edition colour wax) 3C164 63411/A **£2,000**



2 WISH YOU WERE HERE 1975

Furthering *Dark Side Of The Moon*'s preoccupation with mental anguish and schizophrenia, 1975's follow-up *Wish You Were Here* is just as potent a statement. However, whereas the preceding record had solid, definable songs at the core of the textured production, this record allows compositions to breathe and evolve gradually, resulting in a more nuanced, considered record. Legend has it that the record was quite a difficult one to make, directly inspired by the mental breakdown of Syd Barrett (he even visited the studio during its making). It's also a tour-de-force for David Gilmour – and a critically revered masterpiece.

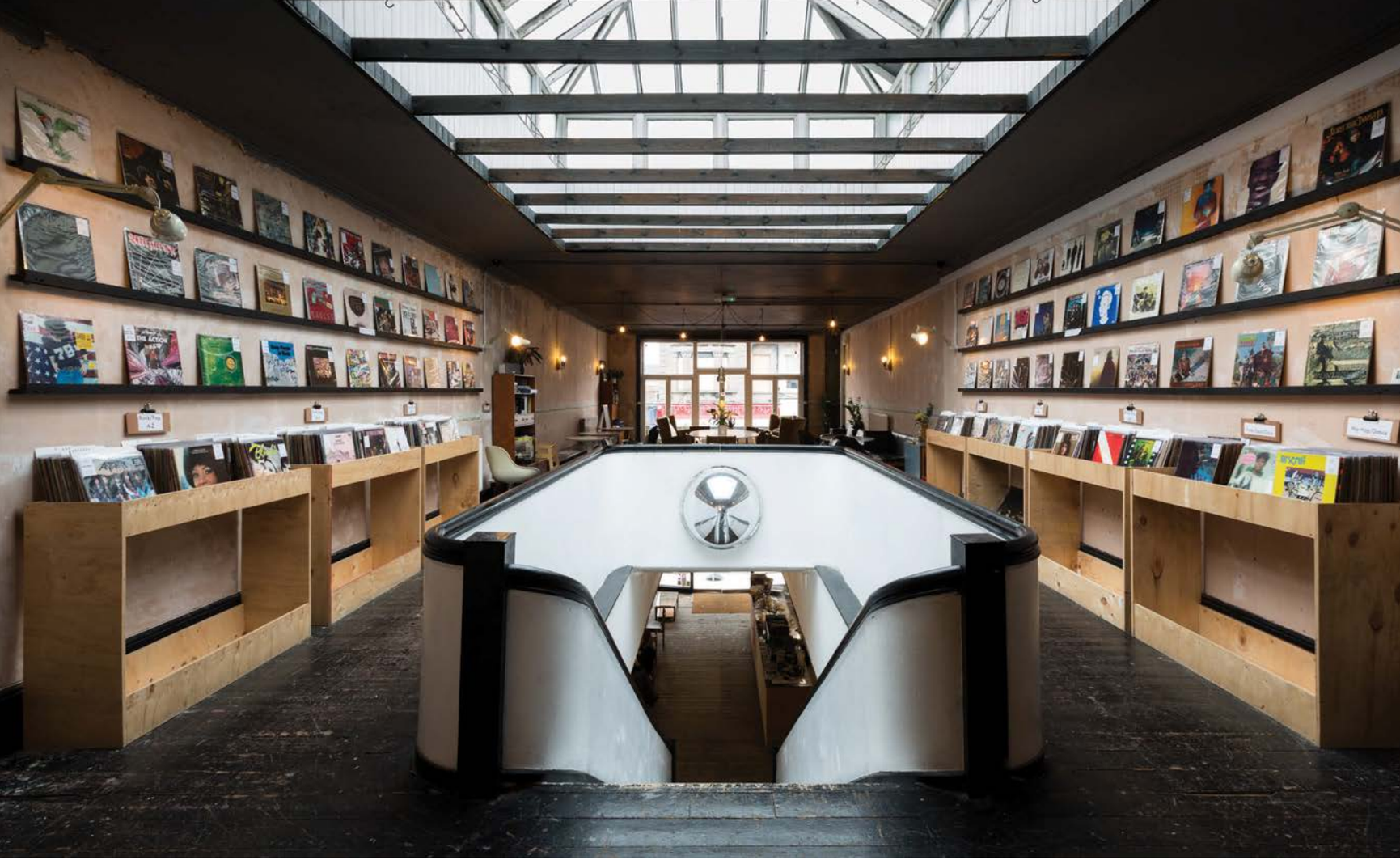
Latest 2016: Pink Floyd Music B005360CZK (180g) **£20**
Rarest 1975: Harvest Records (UK first issue) **£200-£9,000**

THE DARK SIDE OF THE MOON 1973

The pinnacle of the Pink Floyd canon. *The Dark Side Of The Moon* is an ambitious masterpiece of album craft, taking the listener on a seamless sonic journey through the pits of despair, hysteria, paranoia and opiated serenity. It juggles a multitude of themes and contains such career-defining compositions as the infectious *Money*, the detached majesty of *Breathe* and the shimmering beauty of *Us And Them*. The album is among the finest records of the 1970s and is designed to be a transcendent unbroken listening experience. Also featuring Storm Thorgerson's iconic prism cover image, The *Dark Side Of The Moon* remains the finest record in the Pink Floyd canon. ●

Latest 2016: Pink Floyd Music B005360CZA (180g) **£20**
Rarest 1973: Harvest Records SHVL 80 **£600**

Pink Floyd
THE ESSENTIAL



Gabrielle Hall

SEASIDE SOUNDS

CLIFFS, MARGATE

A decade as a lighting designer enabled Ed Warren to collect vinyl from all over the globe. Back in the UK, there was only one thing to do – open a record shop, he tells **Gary Walker**

Margate's Cliffs stands as a tangible reminder of co-owner Ed Warren's travels around the world as the founder of Next Level Lights. At the top of its striking monochrome Victorian staircase, classic records by Bob Dylan, Iggy Pop, The Smiths, The Who and Lou Reed – the souvenirs of Ed's numerous world tours – watch over the crate-digging customers, while the intoxicating aroma of freshly ground coffee rises from the ground-floor cafe and in-house roastery.

Spending a decade on tour with the likes of Mumford & Sons, Metronomy and The Strokes, lighting stages everywhere from Glastonbury to Fuji Rock, Roskilde and The Hollywood Bowl, Ed was unwittingly doing the research for what would become Cliffs, exploring the world's best record shops and bringing home suitcases full of vinyl from the US, Japan and all corners of Europe. Eventually, the penny dropped and Ed decided to hang up his AAA pass, return home and set up shop.

Opening last year on the site of a former oriental tea room and antiques shop, and injected with bohemian minimalist style by Ed's partner, interior designer and yoga teacher Kier Muddiman, Cliffs has breathed new metropolitan life into the faded seaside glamour of the Kent town's Northdown Road. Set over three floors, there are already more than 2,000 records on sale, a 50-seat cafe and a fully licensed 100-capacity basement gig venue. There's even a hair salon and studio space that plays host to yoga, pilates, Tai Chi and antenatal classes. Make a list of on-point reasons to leave the house, and Cliffs has them all covered.

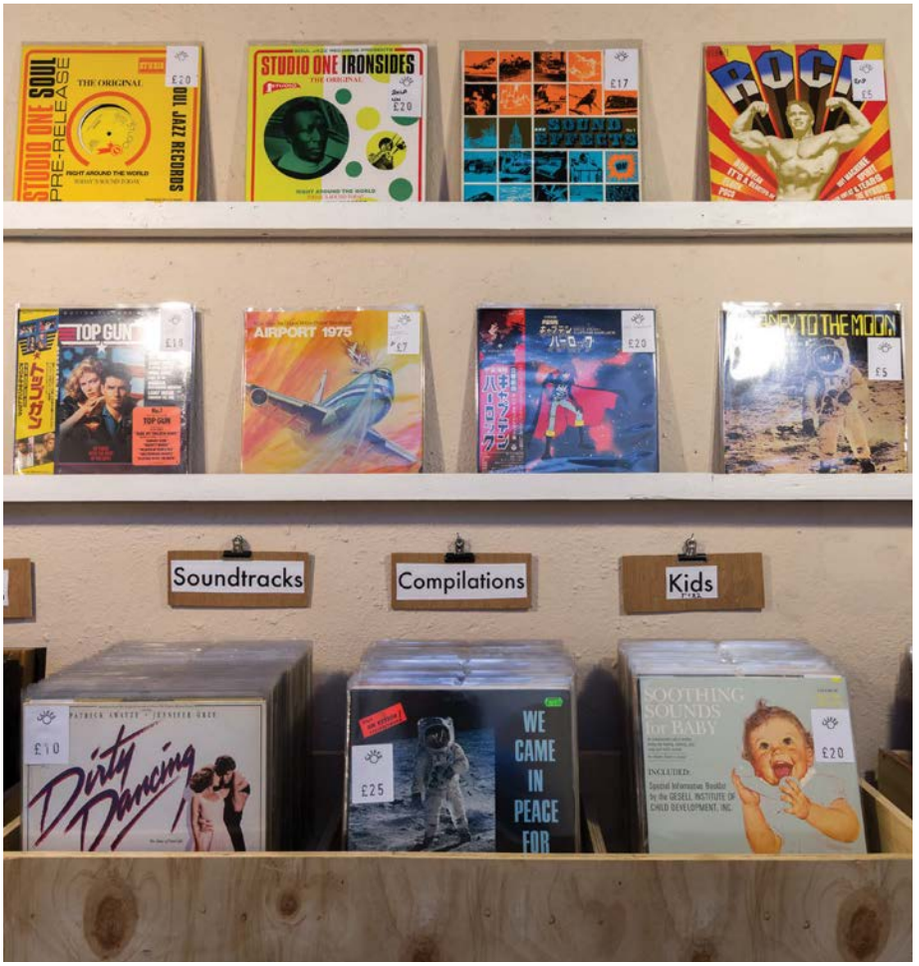
Ed's route to opening his own shop was a circuitous one, although fittingly enough, it started with a job in a record shop. "I finished university in Southampton with a journalism degree, but decided I didn't want to be a journalist, so I got a job in a new record shop that was opening up," he says. "I worked there for a couple of years and had an amazing time, but knew it wasn't something I wanted to do forever. A friend's band, Delays, ended up getting a deal with Rough Trade and they were regulars in the shop.

"I guess they liked the cut of my jib, as they offered me a job going on tour with them selling their T-shirts and albums. So I took that up without thinking twice, went on the road with them and ended up becoming their lighting guy through a series of fortunate accidents. Then it kind of just snowballed from there, working with bigger bands and bigger shows, through to where I am now, running my own lighting-design business.

"I've been fortunate to have been to some incredible places I'd have never gone to ordinarily. I've been to Brazil, Colombia, dark corners of Europe, South Africa, almost every state in the USA… I've lit the Glastonbury headliners (Mumford & Sons in 2013), Reading and Leeds (Mumfords in 2015 and The Strokes in 2011), been to Japan 10 times, including the Fuji Rock and Summer Sonic festivals, Roskilde in Denmark, Sasquatch in Washington State… The Hollywood Bowl, The O2 in London, Red Rocks in Colorado…

> LIGHTING DESIGN HAS TAKEN ME TO SOME INCREDIBLE PLACES I'D HAVE NEVER GONE TO ORDINARILY. I'VE BEEN TO BRAZIL, COLOMBIA, DARK CORNERS OF EUROPE, SOUTH AFRICA, ALMOST EVERY STATE IN THE USA…
>
> **ED WARREN**

Pictures Ollie Harrop



> THE BEST THING IS WHEN PARENTS PUT THEIR KIDS ON THE LISTENING STATION WITH A RECORD AND THEY SIT AND LISTEN TO MUSIC ON HEADPHONES FOR THE FIRST TIME. IT'S LIKE OPENING THEM UP TO A WHOLE NEW WORLD
>
> **ED WARREN**

"I've done some really dark and dank nightclubs in Europe and the backwaters of America, a gig in a baseball stadium, on school fields, in a school itself, in someone's front room, in a shopping centre, on boats, trains, airports…"

From LA to Tokyo, the relentless round-the-clock schedule of working with touring bands – the transatlantic flights, late-night loadouts and debilitating stomach complaints – left Ed with enough downtime to expand his record collection to vast proportions. Waking early each day, he and his sound guy would jump on their bikes and explore the world's cities – and their record shops. "We'd pinpoint a record shop, go straight to it and pick up some records. It was the summer of 2015 and we just had a really enjoyable time finding record shops. I was on tour with Mumford & Sons, and I wouldn't start work until noon, so I'd get up at eight o'clock, have breakfast and go and find record shops – that's where this place has come from.

"More often than not, the record shops would be combined with a coffee shop, and it worked really well. I love hanging out in those spots, so I guess I was subconsciously doing research early on. It's definitely rubbed off on this place. I love hanging out here, for one!

"I remember there was a really good record shop in Las Vegas called Record City, and I spent a lot of time in there, and bought a copy of *Lola Versus Powerman* by The Kinks in there, and I've kept it for myself because I was looking for the record at that very time, and they pressed play and put it on while I was in the shop.

"Kier and I went on holiday to Japan, too, and came back with two suitcases of records, a lot of Japanese versions of albums, Japanese Manga compilations and stuff. We brought back tonnes of stock, and it's all out for sale – and has been selling."

With more than 2,000 records in store, Ed says that bargain buys are proving the most popular with Cliffs' customers, and he resists the temptation to raise the bar too high. "We sell a lot of lower- and mid-priced stuff in store, the stuff that ranges from £3 to £7 is probably our highest-selling range. People love a bargain and I like to price my records so we sell them. I don't want them to hang around for ages.

"I've got the Edgar Broughton Band's *Wasa Wasa* for sale for a very reasonable £140, compared to how much other people are selling it for online. I've got the Led Zeppelin six-LP boxset for £150, an *Appetite For Destruction* still shrinkwrapped, a lot of great old jazz records and, of course, my *Star Trek* collection. Most of the higher-priced stuff sells via our Discogs site – in store, we tend to sell more of the £3 to £12 albums.

"We've got a copy of *Sgt. Pepper's…* in top condition, and a compilation that surprised me, called *From Bromley With Love*. It's an 80s new-wave synth compilation from 1981 that's going for £100. It's quite a rare compilation in excellent condition. We've got a really good selection of Smiths records, Tom Waits records, Led Zeppelin, Sex Pistols, 70s disco 12" singles – a lot of Chic and Donna Summer, that kind of stuff. We sell a lot of disco and hip-hop stuff, but the classics always sell.

"Someone sold me their whole collection on eBay for next to nothing, and it was full of loads of old Nirvana, Metallica, Britpop, a fully intact Beatles 'White Album' with photos inside, stuff like Blur, Oasis and Suede that was all worth quite a bit of money and in really good nick, so that was a great find.

"Some people have no idea what records are worth. I bought someone's heavy-metal collection, which included a load of amazing picture discs and limited-edition records. I'm also obsessed with buying *Star Trek* albums! I have all the movie soundtracks on vinyl, and tons of these comic books with 7" accompaniments. They're great and the kind of thing I would have been obsessed with as a kid – and still am! Like most record shop owners, I'm building exactly the kind of shop I would want to see."

The reaction from the people of Margate to this temple of urban cool has been universally positive, with people from all demographics calling its relaxed environs a home from home. It's no exaggeration to state that an entire community has been built around vinyl. Freelance media types stare into their MacBooks, parents sink into stylish olive-green armchairs and nurse cappuccinos while their children play, and crate-diggers of all persuasions feed their vinyl addiction. "I enjoy watching people's reactions as they walk in for the first time," reflects Ed. "Everyone who comes in to look around comments on how nice it looks and how at home it makes them feel. We get people come and stay here for hours, to hang out and to meet people.

"It's given Margate another place to meet and bump into people, and a lot of creative people come and work here all day and work off each other. People come in with their dogs, there's an old guy who comes in every day and has a cup of tea and sits down for half an hour… we've got so many regulars.

"Kier is an amazing interior designer and architect. She sourced all the furniture locally. It's a very minimal, Scandinavian, clutter-free vibe with the emphasis on keeping the incredible old building as natural-looking as possible. We've got an amazing Victorian stairway going up the middle of the building; it's one of the first things you see when you walk in. We built all the racks and the counter ourselves, and just wanted to create somewhere you'd want to spend all day.

"We're also very kid-friendly – we have two play areas, and the new generation of kids love it! The best thing is when parents put their kids on the listening station with a record and they sit and listen to music on headphones for the first time. It's like opening them up to a whole new world."

Ed says the reason for the industry's recent resurgence is simple: "Because you can hold the record in your hand and feel it. You can feel the complete album and carry it home with you, and it's a nice thing to own. Everyone loves their record collection out on display, nobody hides it away. Actually holding an album in your hands is something that's been lost over the years – each album is a work of art. It's a nice way to listen to music, too, you feel more involved. It's kind of therapeutic.

"You listen to it and you're not looking at your phone or pressing buttons or trying to block the outside world out with headphones.

"I'm adding new stock every day, we can fit in around 3,000 records comfortably. We're going to start opening later with more in-store appearances and gigs downstairs. The kitchen's open now so we can do proper food, we're hosting a wedding, a few birthday parties, a baby shower…

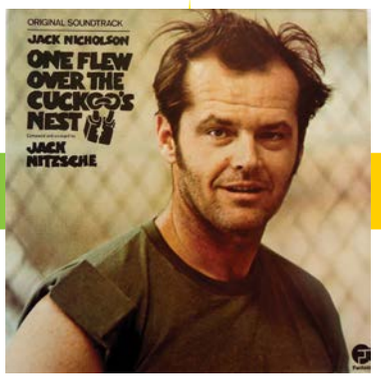
"We're just going to keep going as we're going. Building up the stock, building the events we're putting on, increasing the cafe menu and developing naturally rather than having a gameplan. Luckily, it's gone our way. It's a lot more successful than we expected it to be, we're fortunate with that, and we've got the scope to toy around with it and see what works." ●

THE BIG THREE

Ed's Three Favourite Records In Cliffs

THE MUSIC OF COSMOS
VANGELIS
RCA

"This is the soundtrack to the original *Cosmos* TV series, hosted by Carl Sagan, who was my favourite astronomer in the early 80s. He wrote the book *Contact*, and the TV series is incredible. It's him flying through space on his spaceship, and I've got very fond memories of it – the music's incredibly spacey. I found it out record shopping in America, I think."



ONE FLEW OVER THE CUCKOO'S NEST
JACK NITZSCHE
Fantasy

"I love having RP McMurphy gazing at me all day long from the shelf. Jack Nitzsche's soundtrack is just kind of playful. You've got to see the lighter side of that film. The best moments are when they're in the hospital playing around together and having fun. Rather than the negative connotations of what happens, I think it's quite a happy film."

T.B. SHEETS
VAN MORRISON
Bang Records

"Quite simply an unbelievable album. It's a compilation of some of his best songs. I love *Astral Weeks*, and I think this is a bit more poppy than that. And it's also got *Beside You* on it, which is just a beautiful song. I like compilations, there's no guilt in them, and this flows really well and reminds you of how many good songs Van Morrison had written by that point."

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Classic Album

DEPECHE MODE

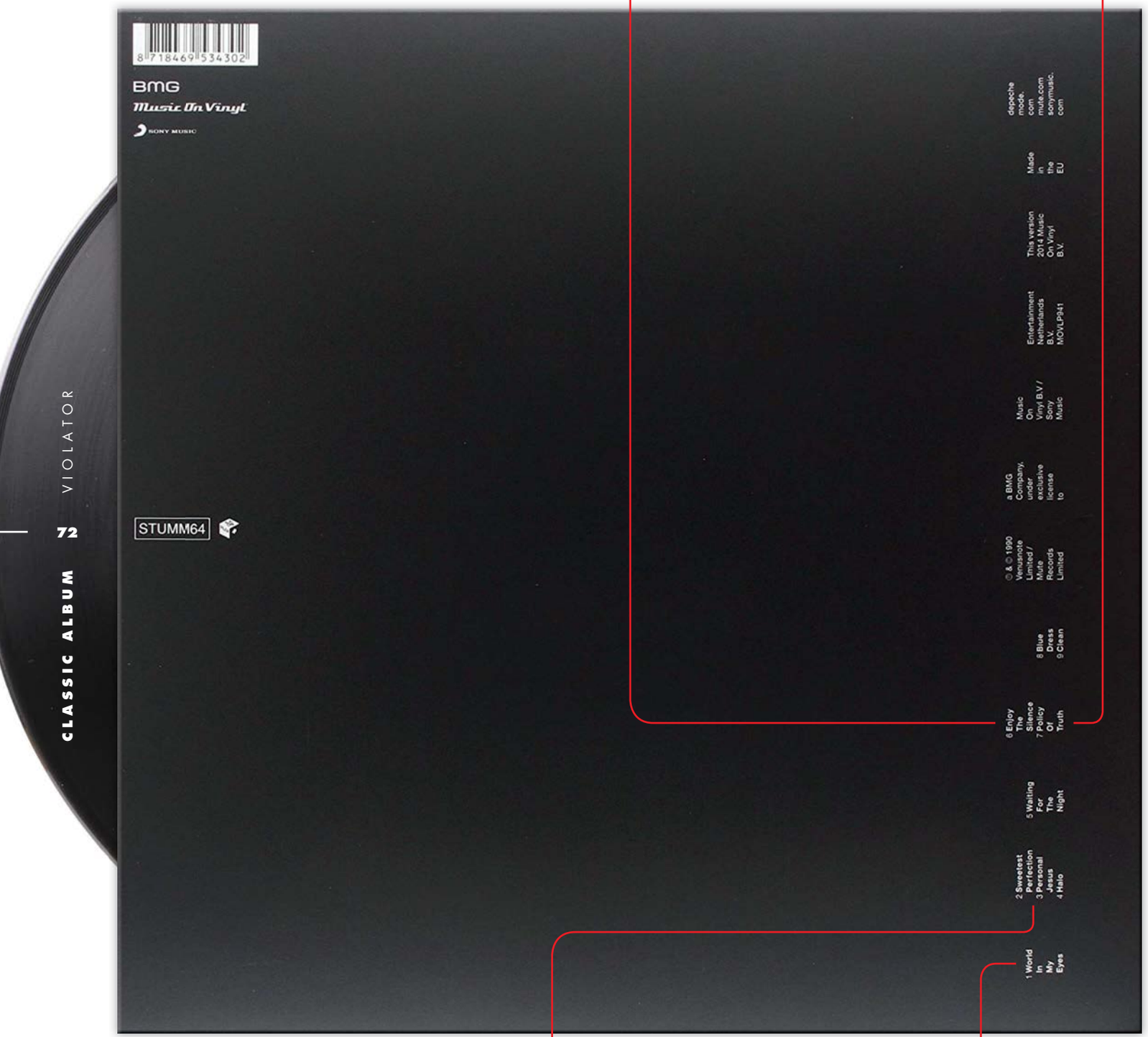
VIOLATOR

In the late 1980s, Depeche Mode were huge Stateside. Appearances would cause riots and they could easily wow 70,000 people in a single sitting. But after six varied and successful albums in one decade, how could they possibly get any higher? Welcome to *Violator*...

violator
Depechemode

ENJOY THE SILENCE
The Mode's most celebrated song was released as the second single from *Violator*, in January 1990. It won the 1991 Brit Award for Best Single and was also Depeche Mode's biggest hit in the US

POLICY OF TRUTH
The third *Violator* single was the only Depeche Mode single ever to chart higher in the US than in the UK



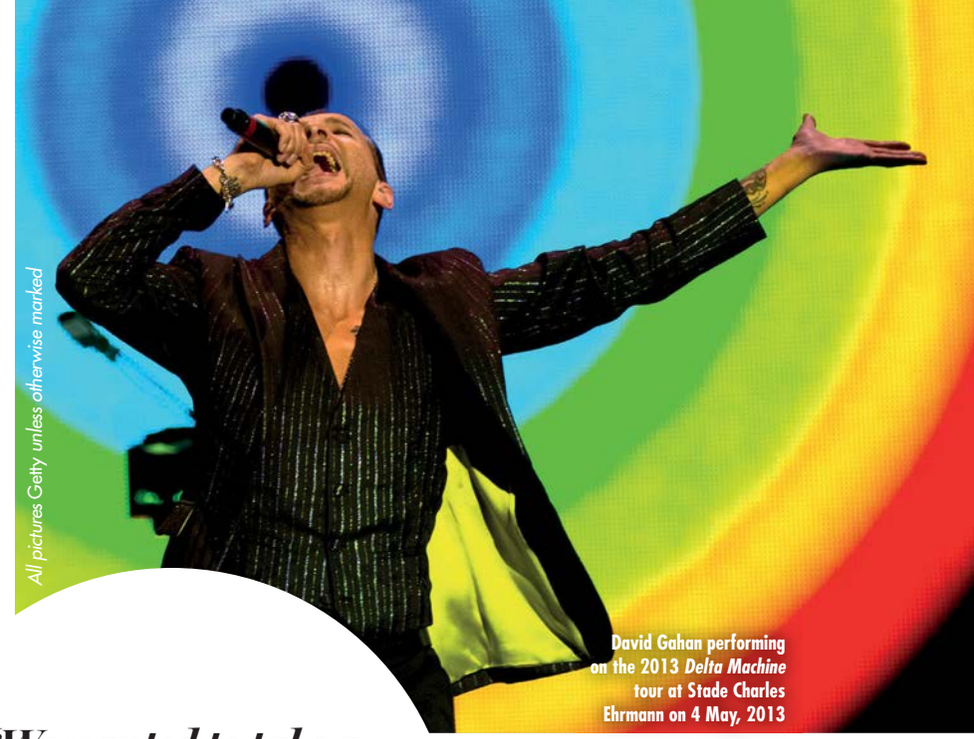
PERSONAL JESUS
Violator's lead single, released in August 1989, was a worldwide hit and the first Depeche Mode song to foreground a guitar riff. It was also the first Depeche Mode single to be released with remixes by artists other than the band. Voted one of the 100 Greatest Songs Ever by *Q* magazine, it was for a time the best-selling 12" single in Warner Bros. history

WORLD IN MY EYES
The final single from the album is keyboard player Andy Fletcher's favourite Depeche Mode track

Depeche Mode might well be judged by the (admittedly now often confused) old man of time as being as important as The Beatles. The band is fast-approaching four decades in music making – yes, really – and in that time, has spread the word of the synth, married it to rock, sold a gazillion albums and singles and become the electronic Rolling Stones (wow, I literally 'just can't get enough' of these classic-band comparisons).

Only whereas the Stones arguably stopped making great albums mere years into their history, the Mode made many well into theirs. And the best of all is *Violator*… This was the band's *Revolver* (alright, I'll stop now), a peak of creativity that introduced their trademark synth tones to the world of rock music.

Previous albums had seen the Depeche output mature from its pop sound (on 1981 debut album *Speak & Spell* and largely on its follow up *A Broken Frame*), through the industrial sample-laden *Construction Time Again* to the darker, more thoughful trio of *Some Great Reward*, *Black Celebration* and *Music For The Masses*. This last album did what it said on the tin, introducing the band's sound to America – which led to a US tour documented in the excellent *101* documentary, and closing with an epic concert at the Rose Bowl stadium in Pasadena in front of 70,000 people.



All pictures Getty unless otherwise marked

David Gahan performing on the 2013 *Delta Machine* tour at Stade Charles Ehrmann on 4 May, 2013

"We wanted to take a different direction… to come across in a more direct way and not to be so fussy"

DAVE GAHAN ON *VIOLATOR*

Andy Fletcher's angelically backlit keyboard setup, also on the *World Violation* tour

Depeche Mode in a typically moody press shot, circa 1990

Photoshot

So with six varied albums already released in the 1980s as the band marched to perfect their sound, with a bigger following than any other band in the world right then – what were Depeche to do as the 80s closed? Only go and record their best album to date…

Violator was recorded in Milan and Denmark and mixed in London by François Kevorkian, who had worked previously on Kraftwerk's *Electric Café*. It might sound like a complicated process, but the band had every intention of making it as simple as possible – at least at the outset…

"We wanted to take a different direction with this album, for the songs to come across in a more direct way and not to be so fussy," Gahan said in an interview shortly after the recording at Puk Studios in Denmark, where they completed *Violator* before it was mixed in London. "We didn't want to be so critical about things and wanted to get more of an energy on to tape when we were recording, rather than play around with sounds for so long that by the time it came to recording, you'd have forgotten about the original direction of the song. So we wanted to work a lot faster but in fact, we've probably taken more time, as you end up experimenting more until you find the right direction for the song! But the songs sound a lot harder,

At Nippon Budokan in Tokyo in 1990, on the *World Violation tour*

> ***"With songwriting I don't have a process. Words come and melodies come and that's it"***
>
> MARTIN GORE ON *VIOLATOR*

Alan Wilder, who was to leave the band after *Songs Of Faith And Devotion*

Martin Gore, the band's chief songwriter

not just in a rocky way, but they are a lot more edgy in terms of sound and feeling.

"We didn't want it to be so cluttered, we wanted it to be more direct," he reiterated to MTV later in 1990. "We worked with Flood [aka Mark Ellis] who helped us a lot. He steered us in a direction that we were trying to find but didn't even know ourselves. He helped develop the songs into something that maybe we wouldn't have done before."

Indeed, Flood and long-time Depeche Mode band member Alan Wilder's inputs cannot be understated. The two worked tirelessly during the album's recordings to provide the atmospheric frameworks within which Martin Gore's songs for *Violator* sat. Yet there was another factor that led to the success of the recording, that is perhaps less well known. Kevin May is the author of *HALO*, a forthcoming book about the making of *Violator*. "Martin Gore, who was still the sole songwriter in Depeche at that point, said years later *Violator* was the last time they had fun making a record. It shines a light on the mood of the band at the time and, in particular, the excitement that was being generated with what was then a new producer in Flood and how they were approaching the entire process. He saw an opportunity to marry the band's core synth sound with 'traditional instruments and really pushed a new tactic for the band, urging Gore to strip his demos back to as basic a form as possible so that they would be more open to manipulation during the recording – essentially allowing Alan Wilder and Flood to add atmospheres, melody, percussion and other elements to each track."

"I just thought it needed another perspective," Mute Records owner and band mentor Daniel Miller told *Electronic Beats* on why he brought the producer in, "and Flood is technically very good, very musical, and very open. He's not one of these, 'This is the way it has to be.' It's more like, 'How can we do it differently?' He was in sync

I FEEL YOU

Gahan on the evolution of the band's sound during* Violator*: "There are drawbacks with using a lot of electronics, because you are geared around the computer and telling it what to do. Everything is perfectly in time, so there can be a lot of feeling lost"

with the band's mentality – and my own."

A fresh approach to the instrumentation also offered a new perspective to everyone, combining electronics and traditional sounds. And it seems Flood was the perfect producer to link these two elements. Martin Gore, the album's songwriting architect, however, downplays his own talents as ever, and told a very bored MTV reporter in 1990 of the songs on *Violator*: "I don't have a natural process, I just sit down and write a song. Words come, melodies come and that's it."

VIOLATOR VERSUS SOFAD

It's difficult to talk about *Violator* without talking about the tour that preceded it – with that Pasadena closing show – and the album that came after it. *Songs Of Faith And Devotion* couldn't have had a more different sound: gospel, soul, rock and electronics, and that's just on the track *Condemnation*. Yet its inception was hell – the opposite to the apparent happiness permeating the *Violator* sessions. Ironically, though, it's hailed as the other Mode masterpiece – although it nearly destroyed the band, as the egos spawned by success, drugs and rock 'n' roll nearly swallowed their owners.

"During *Violator*, the band had still managed to keep their feet on the ground," says May. "While they had an inkling early on that they were creating something important, unique, creative and what would eventually turn out to be an important album for fans and acclaimed by critics, they were, in the words of many in the camp at the time, extremely down to earth and often didn't appear to understand how big they were becoming. This is perhaps difficult to believe, given the success of the previous records and tours… Yet they were still young (Alan Wilder was the oldest, in his early 30s) and, at least outwardly, had largely avoided the trappings of fame."

After the recording, François Kevorkian mixed the album – the most difficult part of the process. "He's one of the most intense people I know," Daniel Miller told *Electronic Beats*. "He would work for 18 hours a day and I think he got through at least three different engineers, because they couldn't take it. He's so obsessive and so brilliant, and made a great record in *Violator*."

U.S. CAN'T GET ENOUGH

Violator *sold for the masses – a million copies in the States alone – and when the band turned up fo a signing at a record store in Los Angeles, 20,000 fans showed up, causing what the local media described as riots. "It got a bit out of hand," Dave said with typical understatement in 1990…*

Violator on vinyl

With so many millions sold, and relatively recently, second-hand prices for *Violator* aren't exactly sky high. Expect to pay anything between £10 and £20 depending on condition (although some people are asking for £50-plus for the original pressing, so don't be tempted). There's also a newer gatefold 180g version that retails for between £18 and £25 and several limited editions and picture discs that might be good investments. At the time of writing, a rare Mexican picture disc of *Violator* is up for £150, while a *Violator 2000* remix album (with a white cover, but still the red flower) which was limited to 330 is up for what seems a quite reasonable £69.99. There are countless international versions available – expect to pay upwards of £30 for some of the Eastern European ones. The rarest version we found was a promo boxset containing the vinyl, cassette and CD of *Violator* selling for £572 back in 2008. This was one of just 100 ever made and sent out to DJs when the album came out in 1990. We've seen one of these that had been owned by popular Radio 1 DJ Mike Read that sold for £434. This was back in 2010, so expect to pay a lot more if you can track one down.

The songs

1 *WORLD IN MY EYES*
Martin Gore

Gahan *lead vocal*
Gore *backing vocals, guitar, keyboard*
Wilder *keyboard, drum machine, backing vocals*
Fletcher *keyboard, backing vocals*
Flood and band *production*

Described as one of Depeche Mode's sexiest songs, *World In My Eyes* very much sums up the mood of the band at the point of recording *Violator* – all were involved and in perfect unity. It originated from a Gore demo, as most Mode songs do, of course, but its evolution in the studio was a dramatic one. Not only that, but all the band contributed vocals to it – a rare occurence but perhaps one that signified the unity and friendship that ran through the Depeche Mode camp at the time.

2 *SWEETEST PERFECTION*
Martin Gore

Gahan *backing vocal*
Gore *lead vocals, guitar, keyboard*
Wilder *keyboard, drum machine*
Fletcher *keyboard*
Flood and band *production*

Interestingly, *Sweetest Perfection* could well have been a Gahan-led song, according to the lead singer. "There are songs on the album where I might have sung, but Martin did instead," Gahan told MTV in 1990. "*Sweetest Perfection* is a song that maybe I would have sung." This swapping of traditional roles on *Violator* was intentional – partly because Flood bought a 'no rule book' approach to the recording of the album. In this case, *Sweetest Perfection* was originally more suited to Gahan, but Gore sang it – the opposite happened on the later track *Waiting For The Night*. *Sweetest Perfection* is not the best track on the album – but in the context, is still great. It builds to an almost psychedelic conclusion, complete with filtered beats and layers of atmosphere – "the kind of thing you resort to when you haven't really got an ending," Wilder recalls – and while not the strongest, is perhaps the most timeless track.

3 *PERSONAL JESUS*
Martin Gore

Gahan *lead vocal*
Gore, Wilder, Flood *synths and production*

"Obviously, it has religious overtones," Gahan said in 1990, "but the idea for the song actually came from when we were touring America. When you are in America, there are all these TV channels where you switch on and there is someone trying to sell you some sort of religion and you usually have to pay like $20 or something and then they send you your own personal rainbow or whatever you want to call it. These sorts of people seem to be very hypocritical of their own religion. To be a Christian or whatever is supposed to be private and you find something that is important to you. It's also when you are at your most vulnerable that you turn to religion, so these sorts of people who take money from people who ring up who just need someone to talk to, it just seems all twisted and wrong – that's why Martin wanted to write the song, because he felt this was making a mockery of the Christian movement." Martin was also apparently inspired by how Priscilla Presley had described her relationship with Elvis. Either way, the song caused enough controversy to help make it become one of Depeche Mode's biggest hits around the world (13 in the UK, 28 in the States). It also notably featured a guitar riff, one of the first Mode tracks to feature one so prominently. The song was also famously covered by Marilyn Manson and Johnny Cash (separately, not together) and not so famously by Tori Amos and many others.

The songs *continued*

4 *HALO* Martin Gore

Gahan *lead vocal*
Gore *backing vocals, guitar*
Wilder *keyboard, drum loops*
Fletcher *keyboard*
Flood *production*

HALO **is one of the unsung heroes of *Violator*, perhaps because it sits in the shadow of *…Jesus* (the song that is). Yet of the two, *HALO* has actually worn far better over the following 27 years. It's Depeche Mode at their best, with a stomping electronic intro – the bass produced from two classic synths, an ARP and Minimoog – and searing string-laden chorus. Alan Wilder also states on his own *Recoil* website that it is one of his favourite tracks from the album. "I like the string arrangement and the fact that we used drum loops on it – something we had hardly done before that time."**

5 *WAITING FOR THE NIGHT* Martin Gore

Gahan *shared vocal*
Gore *shared vocal*
Wilder *keyboard, sequencer*
Flood *production and sequencer*

The low-key *Waiting For The Night* is an astonishing Depeche Mode track for many reasons, not least because such a simple arrangement resulted in such a memorable track. It was also one of the few completely shared vocal tracks that Gahan and Gore have been credited with. "It was a song that Martin would possibly have sung," said Gahan, "but is actually a duet between us. I just phoned him up and said 'I really like the song, can I sing on it?'" With that stunning and simple arrangement, it's Flood and Alan Wilder that once again steal the show. "Flood and I had been listening to Tangerine Dream and decided to try and create a similar atmosphere for this track," Alan Wilder says on *shunt3.0.recoil.co.uk*. "The main sequence was put together using his ARP and the sequencer that accompanies the synth. The charm of the ARP sequencer stems from the slight tuning and timing variations that occur each time the part is played. This gives a sense of fluidity and continual change, which seems to suit the song." He's not wrong there – the results are still simply mesmerising.

6 *ENJOY THE SILENCE/ INTERLUDE CRUCIFIED* Martin Gore

Gahan *lead vocal*
Gore *backing vocals, electric guitar*
Wilder *keyboard, drum machine*
Fletcher *keyboard*
Flood *production*
Daniel Miller and Phil Legg *additional mixing*

"It's just about a feeling of not wanting anything else, feeling totally satisfied, when even words are an intrusion," Martin told MTV in 1990 when asked about *Enjoy The Silence*. "You just don't need anything else." The track was the second single from *Violator*, and went Top 10 both in the UK and the States and even won the band a Brit in 1991. The final version of *Enjoy The Silence* was very different to the original demo, something that appears to have happened a lot with many of the songs on *Violator* but in this case it was the most dramatic change of all. "Strangely, the thing that immediately came to mind was that I could hear Neil Tennant singing it in my head," Wilder says of his first listen of the original demo. "Something about the line 'all I ever wanted' sounded very Pet Shop Boys to me. Most Depeche Mode songs changed tempo to some degree from the original demo, although none I can think of have been that extreme." The song was also backed by a video that has split the Mode community with some citing it as cheesy. The truth is even its star believed that shortly after filming it… "We did it in Portugal, in the Swiss Alps, Scotland and London," Gahan told MTV in 1990. "It took about a week, mainly me walking around with a king's outfit on which I hated, but was convinced by everyone it would be okay, and everyone after said it looks great, but I still think I look a prat in it… The only thing the band did were two hours in London looking moody."

7 *POLICY OF TRUTH* Martin Gore

Gahan *lead vocal*
Gore *backing vocals, keyboard, guitar*
Wilder *keyboard, drum machine, backing vocals*
Fletcher *keyboard*
Flood, Wilder *production*

The third, and some would say best, single from *Violator* landed Depeche Mode another Top 20 hit in both the States and the UK. Again, it's classic Mode with singalong verses and a chorus to get any 70,000 stadium going. The only thing that lets it down is the rather screeching sound that follows the 'the time before' lyric at around two minutes (and now we've pointed that out, we will ruin that part of the song for you). The video is slightly less memorable than that of *Enjoy The Silence* and indeed less controversial.

8 *BLUE DRESS/INTERLUDE* Martin Gore

Gore *lead vocal, electric guitar*
Wilder *keyboard, drum machine*
Fletcher *keyboard (possibly)*
Flood *production*

Blue Dress **is Gore at his stalking best, a song about him simply watching someone get dressed, but don't get too caught up in thoughts of Martin doing this – you might miss the fact that *Blue Dress* is an exceptional song. It's one that marries guitar riffs and electronics perfectly and builds through layers of strings and class, all the time underpinned and undermined by a cat-like sleazy synth and some rather terrifying, perverted cackling at its close before it drifts into a second Interlude on the album.**

9 *CLEAN* Martin Gore

Gahan *lead vocal*
Gore *backing vocals, electric guitar*
Wilder *keyboard, drum machine*
Fletcher *keyboard*
Flood *production*

By God *Clean* is good – the fact that it closes the album shows the strength and depth of *Violator*. *Clean* opens like a great stomping track from any previous Mode album, but when those tearing strings come in at around three minutes, the hairs on your arms will stand such is the emotion they bring in. You can't ignore the irony of the lyrics either. Gahan might have been the 'cleanest I've been' during the recording of this, but little did he know he would one day be so immersed in drug addiction that it would kill him – albeit for just two minutes…

Martin Gore on stage at the Olympiastadion, Berlin, on 9 June, 2013

Anton – just do it

Unlike much classic album art, the creation of *Violator*'s cover was refreshingly conflict-free. Regular collaborator Anton Corbijn was responsible, but the band had little input. "We have complete confidence in Anton when it comes to things like that," Andrew 'Fletch' Fletcher told *xsnoize.com*. "Basically, he can do what he likes, for the simple reason that we think that's how it'll turn out for the best." And that is exactly what happened with *Violator*, as Anton revealed to *interviewmagazine.com*. "They [Depeche Mode] say, 'Can you do the album?' and I come up with an idea. With *Violator*, I just painted a flower red and nailed it to a board and wrote under it, 'violator'." Easy…

From left to right: Fletch, Gahan, Gore and Wilder in 'happier times' pose

"With Violator, I just painted a flower red and nailed it to a board and wrote under it, 'violator'"

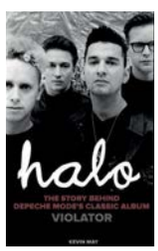
ANTON CORBIJN

Miller made a very important contribution to the final recording, taking an early version of *Enjoy The Silence* that he wasn't pleased with and remixing it with engineer Phil Legg. "I think they were so burned out by the end – it took a long time making that record – that they said, 'Okay, whatever you say,' and they used that version." That version went on to be the single and contributed greatly to the overall success of *Violator*. And what a success that was. All four singles from *Violator* charted around the globe while the album even scored a No. 2 in the UK – the home country finally embracing its own band.

AFTERMATH

The *Violation* tour followed, one as crazy and excessive as anything that had gone before. Over 88 dates, the band played to 1.2 million people. The experience would wipe the Mode out for a while and it would be two years until they got their breath back to reform for *Songs Of Faith And Devotion*. "A lot of things happened to the individuals in the band during and after the *Violator* tour," Miller told *Electronic Beats*. "They never changed as people, they were always very down to earth, but they'd been elevated into superstars and that does have an effect on people."

Kevin May adds: "Gahan had moved to Los Angeles and found his life being consumed by a heroin habit, as well as falling in with the emerging grunge scene and sound; and there was a general feeling that Flood and Wilder wanted to push the musical style that they had generated on *Violator* even further, using full segments of live musical performance in the recording." Where everything came together so well for *Violator*, it fell apart for *SOFAD*.

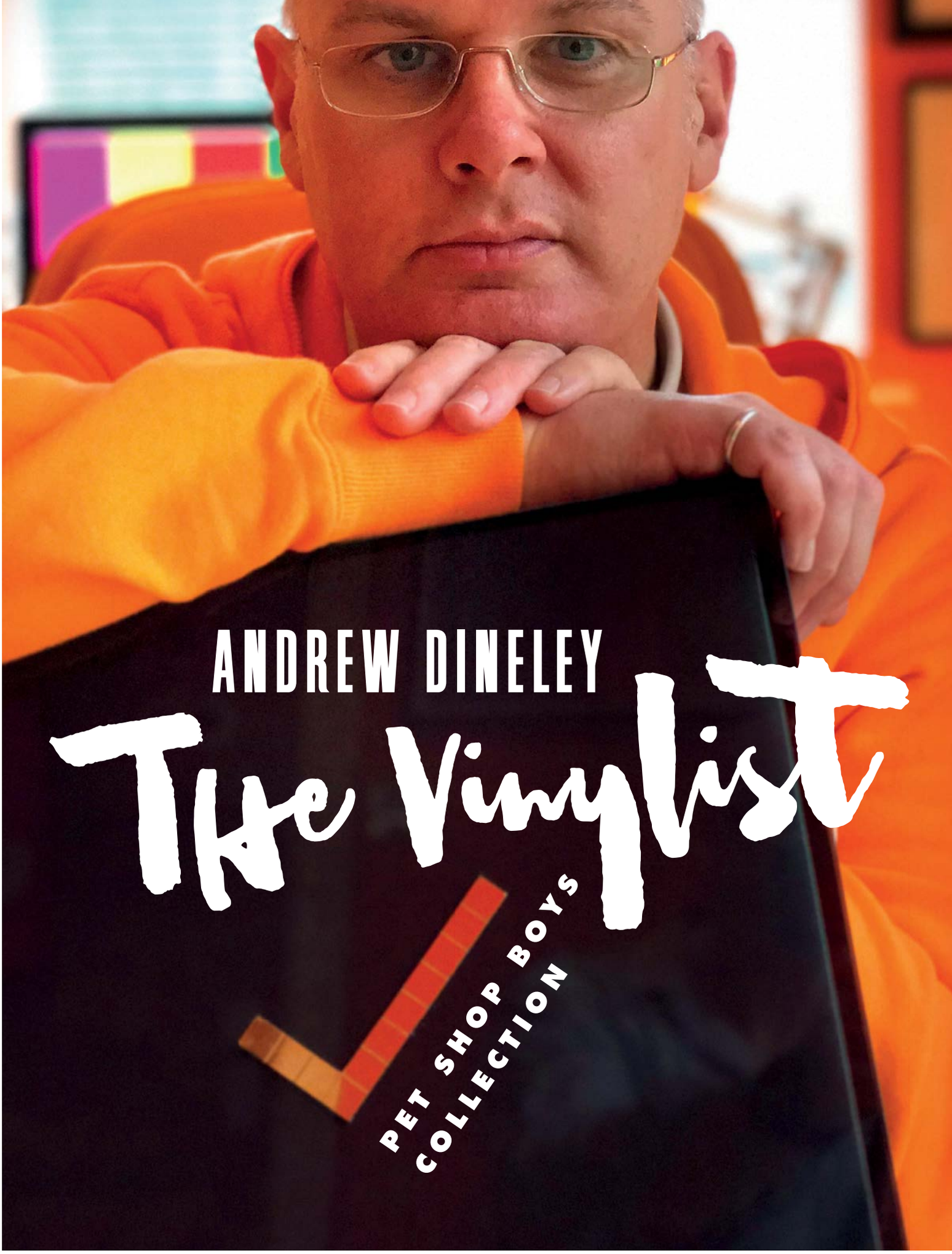


THANKS! to author and journalist Kevin May for his input with this feature. His book ***Halo,*** the story behind ***Violator*** is due to be published soon. More from www.halotheviolatorbook.com

Even though that album was a huge commercial success, it couldn't have happened without the experiences of *Violator*. The two are linked intrinsically because of this, even though the styles and the experiences recording them are so different… "Inevitably, *Violator* laid the foundations for when things started going wrong structurally," May agrees, "but that is often what happens when important moments in the history of a band take place and things begin to unravel. Depeche's legion of fans argue endlessly as to the merits or otherwise of everything that the band produces, yet none will begrudge *Violator*'s pivotal role in the evolution of the band and the impression that it left."

Wilder would leave the band after *SOFAD*, but his reasons perhaps stem back from those earlier sessions working with Flood. "The simple answer is I'd just had enough of being in the group and felt I couldn't really do much more," he told this author in 1997. "There were difficulties and communication breakdowns. I think most of the detailed work was too boring for the other members of the group, so they tended to disappear and allow me and Flood to get on with it."

Since then, of course, Gahan has once again become the cleanest he's been, and Depeche Mode have released several further albums. However, none have matched *Violator* – it really was the sound of a band on fire and form, and one that worked as a unit in its most creative phase of the last four decades. ●



Product pictures Andrew Dineley, *Portrait pictures* John Scotland

The critical accolades that Pet Shop Boys continue to reap this far into their career come as no surprise to fans of the band, but the casual listener may not appreciate the expansive and varied nature of their artistic endeavours. We dig deep into their repertoire with **Andrew Dineley** – a superfan who has followed the duo from the start…

Last year, I travelled to London to see Pet Shop Boys in concert again. This was the 10th time that I've seen them live over three decades and it roughly coincided with it being 30 years since the release of their debut album, *Please*. That spectacular run of shows at London's Royal Opera House and the acclaimed *Super* tour that followed showcased their newer material, along with selections from a back catalogue of obscurities and classics – evidence, if it were required, that Neil Tennant and Chris Lowe are still the pop kids who could never be accused of being boring. I'll stop with the song titles there.

Since 1985 and their first big hit, the remixed, re-release of *West End Girls*, they've sold more than 50 million records worldwide and are now listed in the *Guinness Book Of World Records* as the most successful duo in UK music history. I love that they still care – an obsessive attention to detail continues to run through everything they do, and the fact that they still release physical singles and bother with things like beautiful cover art and pop videos is something to be celebrated.

Because of the diverse nature of their prodigious output, it's impossible to do it credit in one article, but there have been plenty of academic papers written – and their physical body of work, predominantly designed with Mark Farrow, has been catalogued in a weighty tome, appropriately entitled *Catalogue*.

Their long-term relationship with Farrow has been as important to the Pet Shop package as any producer they've chosen to work with on an album, or fellow artists they've selected for collaboration. From the start, Farrow has helped ensure visual consistency and an impeccable aesthetic in everything they've created together. Together, they've always made their output look as good as it sounds.

Pet Shop Boys rarely disappoint, and even when they do produce something that may not quite work, it's always worth appreciating that they've dared to try something different. The fact that they've successfully applied their talents to pop, art, theatre, film, design, soundtracks, ballet scores and a multitude of other mainstream and leftfield collaborations is commendable. They aren't your traditional pop act and never really were, despite the No. 1 singles and front covers of *Jackie* and *Smash Hits*.

From early on, their work transcended genres; this may also explain why their fanbase remains so diverse. If we were to measure Pet Shop Boys' integrity by just looking at some of the musical artists they've worked with, few could compare. The illustrious list includes Kylie Minogue, Tina Turner, Shirley Bassey, Elton John, Boy George, Yoko Ono, The Killers, Blur, Lady Gaga, Madonna, David Bowie, Liza Minnelli, Dusty Springfield, Jean-Michel Jarre and Robbie Williams. The list is as impressive in other areas of artistic collaboration. From Zaha Hadid for set design, to Es Devlin for staging, Jonathan Harvey for theatre, Bruce Weber for video production, Jack Bond for film and Wolfgang Tillmans for photography. The work of these luminaries is highly regarded in each of their respective fields.

Their recent *NME* Godlike Genius Award came along just a few years after their Brit Award for Outstanding Contribution To Music in 2009 and there are Ivor Novello Awards and plenty of Grammy nominations to add to the list of accolades. Now into their fourth decade working together, it feels as if enough time has elapsed for Tennant and Lowe to perhaps be recognised as the proverbial 'national treasures' – something I'm sure they'd hate. But credit where it's due, few other artists have achieved what they have.

DID YOU KNOW?
In 1989, like many mainstream pop acts of the day, Pet Shop Boys released an annual in time for Christmas. The publication's name, *Annually*, and its cover image both referenced their second album *Actually*, which was in the charts at the time. The title ended up being completely inappropriate, as the book proved to be far from an annual publication – it would be another 28 years before it was followed up in April 2017.

OPPORTUNITIES (LET'S MAKE LOTS OF MONEY)

12" SINGLE 1985
VALUE £10 TO £20

I was still a teenager when I first saw Pet Shop Boys on a short-lived ITV show called *Poparound*. This may have been their first UK TV appearance and was before ***West End Girls*** had been a hit, it was their first release on EMI Records and I loved it instantly. I'd been into electronic music since the late 70s with Kraftwerk, Buggles, M and New Musik and stuck with the genre, but this was like a sonic revolution – a brilliant fusion of pop and politics, something that Neil Tennant would later describe as "Che Guevara to a disco beat". I bought this 12" single the next day and stayed with the duo from then on. The following year, this track was remixed, repackaged and re-released to become a hit, but this version flopped and is quite a rarity now. I prefer this sleeve design to the re-release; it's an early example of Pet Shop Boys portraits in a box on a white background – an enduring design template that would serve them well.

UK TOUR PROGRAMMES

1989 TO 2017

VALUE £15 TO £75 EACH

In 1989, I saw Pet Shop Boys in concert for the first time on their *MCMLXXXIX* tour. They had always said they wouldn't tour, so this felt like something special. The show was directed by Derek Jarman and was a lavish affair in every way – the staging, arrangements, lighting, films and merchandise were peerless. The duo now tour regularly and their tour-programme design is always exceptional and something worth collecting. I am not a completist, but I always buy them at the merch stand. As a designer myself, it's always interesting to see the unusual format and layout their designer, Farrow, employs. In my opinion, nobody does it this well, each is a work of art in its own right.

DID YOU KNOW?

While Neil Tennant is rightly recognised as the singer in Pet Shop Boys, he doesn't always take the lead-vocal role. Chris Lowe's voice can be heard on more than enough tracks to make up an album of its own, including several tracks where he takes the lead. He was also the sole vocalist on a 2011 cover version of New Order's 1985 single, *Sub-Culture*, with Stop Modernists (Jori Hulkkonen and Alex Nieminen).

PSB51 LIVE AT THE HAÇIENDA

MANCHESTER 1992 TICKET STUB

VALUE £10 TO £20

On 13 May 1992, Pet Shop Boys performed at Manchester's Haçienda as part of the legendary nightclub's 10th Anniversary celebrations, catalogued as FAC51 on the ticket and in the Factory Records archive. The duo were in their 'imperial phase' at this time, regularly filling arenas worldwide, so tickets for this intimate gig were hard to come by, despite their high price. This AIDS fundraiser was introduced by Derek Jarman with Pet Shop protégé, Cicero, as the support act. I secured a great position and was able to snap these photographs from close up. It was also at this gig that *Go West* was performed for the very first time. The track was selected specially for this show, after they abandoned an arrangement of The Beatles' *Fool On The Hill*. This Village People track was such a hit on the night that they decided to record and release it as a single the following year – the rest is history…

KIKI KOKOVA, ATOMIZER AND PETE BURNS 12" SINGLES

12" SINGLES 2003 TO 2004
VALUE £30 TO £60 EACH

Pet Shop Boys are well known for their collaborations with some of pop's biggest names, but in 2003, they set up a couple of record labels to release more obscure tracks with less mainstream partners. They established two labels – Lucky Kunst and Olde English Vinyl. Under these, they released this 12" single with artist, Sam Taylor-Wood (using the pseudonym of Kiki Kokova), for a cover version of Donna Summer's ***Love To Love You, Baby***. There were also releases with Pete Burns and Atomizer that became electro-clash, underground classics. These three 12" singles were very limited editions and while they may not be the best pieces of music that they've released, their obscurity makes them highly collectible.

IT DOESN'T OFTEN SNOW AT CHRISTMAS

CD 1997
VALUE £100 TO £200

Pet Shop Boys established a Fan Club in 1989 which lasted for an impressive 25 years. During this period, many treasures were distributed to club members, including newsletters, posters, T-shirts, DVDs and Christmas cards in dozens of ingenious formats – from advent calendars to cut-out masks.

In 1997, they gifted this festive package exclusively to club members in its own silvery bubble-wrap sleeve. The track was eventually re-recorded and released as a single in 2009 as one track on their 'Christmas' EP, but this collectible little gem is a thing of beauty for me and is highly sought after by collectors.

The resurgence of vinyl in the noughties was something I welcomed. I really did miss the large-format sleeve art and detail it allowed. For this limited-edition release of 300 copies, Pet Shop Boys pushed the boat out creatively with Farrow and delivered something very special indeed. Each of the album tracks was given its own piece of heavyweight 200 gram, 12" vinyl with an instrumental version on each B-side. The coloured sleeves could be arranged to form an eight-foot version of the 'tick' that featured on the main cover design. The smoked Perspex case that housed the vinyl and signed art print came complete with a magnetic closure and gold-plated tick affixed. These sold out quickly when they were released and gave the band confidence to do something similar four years later, with their *Electric* album. This, however, remains the superior release for me.

YES

CD 12" VINYL BOX
VALUE £1,500 TO £3,000

DID YOU KNOW?
In 2001, Pet Shop Boys worked with playwright Jonathan Harvey on a musical entitled *Closer To Heaven*. One of the lead characters – Mile End Lee – was played by Tom Walker. He was new to acting back then, but now he's more widely known as Jonathan Pie, the bitingly satirical news reporter who now sells out theatre tours and whose YouTube videos went viral during last year's US presidential election.

THE MOST INCREDIBLE THING

12" VINYL BOX 2011
VALUE £350

The fact that Neil Tennant and Chris Lowe are always willing to try something new is a commendable and rare thing in pop. I can't think of any other bands that would take on the challenge of producing a ballet based on Hans Christian Andersen's short story *The Most Incredible Thing*. This beautiful limited-edition vinyl box came in a silk cloth-bound slipcase with a hardback book. It's as nice to touch as it is to listen to. Six of the sleeves/pages contain the orchestral soundtrack, along with demo versions exclusive to this release. The seventh sleeve contains a foldout music print, signed by Tennant and Lowe. The ballet's synopsis is printed onto the record sleeves, so that it reads like a giant storybook. For some reason, this release isn't as collectible as their other limited-edition vinyl boxsets, but I love it.

A RED LETTER DAY

12" SINGLE 1997
VALUE £20 TO £30

There's something about coloured vinyl that I still enjoy; it takes me back to my youth and those pink and purple early singles by Squeeze in the 70s. This single wasn't a big hit for Pet Shop Boys and isn't popular with a lot of the fans, but I really like it. What the sleeve may lack in design is compensated for in the finishing and production detail. The vinyl is an amazing shade of red and all the titling is embossed into an ultra-glossy surface that, with the exception of a one-centimetre frame, has a double-hit of red to make it really pop. This is the sort of thing that really appeals to me as a designer and is a perfect example of less being more. The other main colour used with the inside sleeve design is a kind of Manila brown, another nice postal-design reference.

FUNDAMENTAL

INTERVIEW CD 2006
VALUE £50 TO £100

I love trawling through the racks of music in my local charity shops and was over the moon when I discovered this. As I was buying it, the shop assistant felt obliged to point out that I was buying a CD with no music on it. This is a rare interview CD that was released only to radio stations to promote the band's ninth album, *Fundamental*, produced by Trevor Horn. It provides a really interesting insight into the narrative of the album, which remains their most political to date. A pretty tune and thumping dance beat can provide cover for some serious social critique, and *Fundamental* was Pet Shop Boys at their darkest. I paid £1 for this and I've since seen them on eBay for 100 times that price.

SYMPOSIUM

BADGES 2016
VALUE £20 TO £30

Last year, The University Of Edinburgh's College Of Art held a two-day academic Pet Shop Boys symposium. I can't think of another band more worthy of such in-depth analysis and it was really interesting to hear speakers from all over the world intellectually dissect their body of work – from film to theatre and pop to politics. As one would expect, the design of the conference material was impeccable and these badges were a particular highlight. I collected badges as a kid, so it was lovely to see their career represented iconically in hats and headgear. I'm sure Neil and Chris would have approved – I certainly did. These have become collectible and will never be reprinted. I now have them on display in my own design studio.

MOST WANTED
Discovery Tour Programme – 1994
I was never the kind of fan that needed everything in every format, but it does bother me that there is one tour programme missing from my collection. In 1994, Pet Shop Boys toured Singapore, Australia and Central and South America with their *Discovery* extravaganza. This was when they were at their most experimental visually – with the pointy hats, dancers and outlandish otherworldly costumery. The design of this 32-page programme reflected this period and is something I'd love to own, but so far it's eluded me. If someone has one spare, you know the charitable thing to do. ●

AT HOME WITH MAXI JAZZ

Gary Walker visits former Faithless frontman Maxi Jazz for a guided tour of the record collection that has soundtracked his incredible career in music

From humble beginnings in his childhood bedroom in Brixton, via the Soul Food Café soundsystem, a brief career as a pirate radio DJ and onto global success with Faithless, selling 15 million albums along the way, the sound of a stylus tripping across vinyl has soundtracked Maxi Jazz's life.

The 59-year-old Buddhist, who now divides his time between his London home and a winter bolthole and studio in Jamaica, while giving his full musical attention to his new band Maxi Jazz & The E-Type Boys, is a self-confessed hopeless vinyl addict, with a collection of "between five and six thousand" records.

The obsession began to take hold one fateful afternoon in 1984, when The Soul Food Café was founded. "My brother came into my bedroom and said, 'me and the lads have been talking…' One of our mutual friends had a soundsystem at school, he had half and another guy had half, so we decided we were going to buy the other guy's half out and start running the soundsystem on Saturday nights and play parties and stuff. That was the first step to me being here today.

"We bought out the soundsystem and started playing parties, and nobody would come because there were a lot of good sounds in our area – Touch Of Class, Funkadelic, Youthman Promotions for reggae, and Taurus. So getting people to come to your parties wasn't easy."

COUNTER CULTURE

Soundsystem DJ soon became radio DJ as Maxi, with a fast-growing collection of hip-hop vinyl, took to the airwaves with his Reach FM show *In The Soul Kitchen With DJ Maxi Jazz*, but that was far from the end of the story, as the young music fanatic began to experiment with making his own beats.

"I decided from there, 'Why don't we get onto the radio?'. Pirate radio was massive at the time – five or six different stations in London – and it was brilliant. I started to get onto pirate radio, and really that's where the collecting thing started.

"When we played parties, you could go to a party and play the same 100 records and get away with it. On the radio, you can't do that, you have to be finding new stuff and going to the record shop religiously, liaising with the people behind the counter and trying to find that good shit that you can play on the Tuesday night show on LWR or Reach FM or Star Point…

"From there, it was, 'I'm playing hip-hop records on the radio and I've got all of the breaks that the producer used to make this record, but if I'd have made it I'd have put that there, and that over there and done that differently', so that started to excite my interest.

Pictures Mike Prior

vinylfreak

"I MADE JINGLES AND ADVERTS FOR OTHER PEOPLE ON THE RADIO STATION, AT £25 A GO. THAT WAS MY INTRODUCTION INTO MAKING BEATS"

MAXI JAZZ

"One of my favourite DJs ever is David Rodigan, and another is Emperor Rosko, for the same reason: they had the most fantastic jingles.

"So I determined that if I was going to be on the radio, I'd have some funky-ass jingles. I'd do pause-mixing to make jingles for my radio shows, and they'd be quite involved, so I got into this sub-industry of making jingles and adverts for other people on the radio station, at £25 a go. That was my introduction into making beats."

The journey that led Maxi to international stardom with Faithless took another turn in 1989 when The Soul Food Café Band landed a record deal. Maxi takes up the tale: "I'd been collecting all these records, and I got this record deal from Tam Tam Records. I was making beats and I'd got together with this guy who worked in Strongroom Studios and wanted somebody to help him make a record, so off we went. Making beats was my thing and I was in my record collection all day looking for stuff. I had a lot of friends who were very good rappers, but they were young, too. So they'd come to my house, I'd give them a cassette of beats and I'd say, 'Go and write some words and go and sell it'. Three months later, you haven't seen this kid, and either his girlfriend's pregnant or he's gonna have to go to court, or some bollocks is going on, and he hasn't written the lyrics. So it was like, 'If I don't start writing some lyrics here I'm never going to get anywhere', and that's why I started writing words.

"When I discovered hip-hop, particularly *Straight Out The Jungle* by The Jungle Brothers, I realised I could make hip-hop, too, and write lyrics. Mike D and Afrika Bambaataa… their lyrics are playful, funny, intelligent and wise, and all that stuff I realised I could do. I realised there was a niche I could at the very least pop my toe into.

"Jive Records was massive to me. Two of my favourite bands were on Jive – KRS-One and A Tribe Called Quest, and every time I heard of a KRS-One beat out there, I'd leap up immediately and go and find it. It was his golden era, and everything he made was brilliant. My favourite rapper of all, though, is J-Live. He's the cleverest, most insightful and incisive rapper on the planet today."

After Maxi had founded his own record label, Namu, in 1992 and The Soul Food Café had toured with major acts including Jamiroquai, Soul II Soul and Jason Rebello, releasing the album *Original Groovejuice Vol. 1* along the way, The Soul Food Café disbanded, paving the way for the formation of Faithless in 1995.

HYDEPARK CORNERED

When touring, Maxi's downtime between gigs was used to scour the world's record shops. "One of the best things that happened to me were those early days in Faithless," he remembers. "You'd rock up in a town, you might have two days there, and the first thing you do is leave your room, go down and see the concierge and say, 'Right, where's the funky part of town with the record shops?'. The three of us would wander off, and find a record store, and hours later come out with armfuls of vinyl that you couldn't find in the UK anymore.

"In Christiania [an autonomous commune in Copenhagen]… there's a guy called DJ Hydepark, a reggae DJ who must be 6ft 7in tall. He's sold me some of the best reggae music I have in my collection. I've gone into his shop and said, 'I know you won't have it, but…' He'd say, 'Let me have a look-see', and you'd hear this voice echoing from the room behind the counter, saying, 'Do you believe in miracles?' And he'd come out not only with the 7" of the song I want, but two other versions by different artists, and I'd say, 'I love you man!'. Switzerland has always been great for buying records, Germany, too. Zurich had this record shop opposite the venue Faithless played. I'd started that tour by forgetting my wallet, so the tour manager was having to look after my expenditure until we got back home.

"I went into the production office and said, 'Tommy, there's a record shop right across the road, I need some money'. So he got all avuncular, and got out his big old Filofax and handed me a 50-euro note. I looked

MY FIRST RECORD

Despite having over 5,000 records in his collection, amassed over the past five decades, Maxi has no problem recalling his first purchase.

"I absolutely remember the first record I bought," he says. "It was a major revelation. I listened to the radio religiously and it never occurred to my young mind that those songs you heard on the radio, you could go to the shop and buy them. When it occurred to me that's what you could do, I went to the record shop with my seven and six in hand to buy *Layla* by Derek And The Dominos.

"I loved the guitar part, it really moved me. It's amazing, it's the simplest things that sometimes just resonate with people. A lot of the jazz records I love, with extremely technical, highly accomplished players, it's just the simple little riff that drags you from wherever you are into that space."

TOP OF THE SHOPS

Maxi's quest for new material to spin on his radio show took him to all corners of the capital, and some of the record shops he visited back in the mid-80s remain favourite haunts today. "There was a shop in Elephant and Castle and I used to go there in my lunch hour, and there was one by Soho Square, a fabulous place… Honest Jon's in West London – I still go there… Resolution Records in Brixton, because it was just round the corner from me. There were loads… I used to travel miles. I remember trying to get hold of The Beastie Boys' first album when that came out. I don't know how much petrol I must have put in the car to get that album, I went from shop to shop and was in central London before I knew where I was. Eventually, I found one shop that had one copy left! My favourite shop at the moment is my local one, the West Norwood Book And Record Bar, right at the bottom of my road. They've got a nice collection of old records."

him dead in the eye and said, 'And the fucking rest!'. He asked how much I wanted, and I said, 'We'll start with 400 euros!'.

"I took the 400 euros, went into the shop and it was an absolute treasure trove… After three hours, I went back into the office and said, 'Tommy, I need some more money!'. He said, 'How much do you want?!'. 'Another 500!'. We almost had to hire another truck to get it all home!

"The worst thing is when you've got 70 quid and you go to the local record shop and find 80 quid's worth of really good records, so 10 quid's worth of music has to stay in the shop – which records are you leaving behind? These are some of the worst moments I've ever had, and I swore to myself, 'Maxi, if you ever make a proper living at this music business and you've got money in your pocket when you get to the record shops, liberate EVERYTHING'."

With 5,000 records lining the walls of his London house, Maxi finds it hard to pick a most valuable piece. "I'm not sure what the most valuable record in my collection is, but off the top of my head, another one I got from DJ Hydepark, and there's a bit of a story attached to it… It's a Frankie Paul record called *Worries In The Dance*, with Sugar Minott on the other side. I remember Rodigan playing this tune once, and he was so excited to play it. He put it on and said, 'Oh my God, I've played the wrong side!'. He whipped the needle off, turned it over and on came this amazing, awesome tune with a bassline from hell. So we were leaving Copenhagen and stopping off at Christiania to get supplies… I was standing by the bus, surveying the scene and there was this old Danish caravan with a bunch of records for sale, and there was tune after tune after tune.

"I found this Frankie Paul record, turned it round, gave it to Hydepark and said, 'Would you play this for me?' and he put on the wrong side, and that's when I knew I had the right record – both sides have the same label on, saying 'Frankie Paul'! I've never seen another one before or since, and I honestly think if it got stolen or I lost it, or it got broken, that's that…"

Maxi was a regular face in the 80s club scene in London, feeding his deep love of hip-hop, soul, reggae

and dub on dancefloors across the capital and searching for new beats. He admits to feeling alienated at the onset of acid house.

"I grew up with 80s warehouse parties. You come out of a club and there are these dodgy looking blokes in green bomber jackets handing out these really cool flyers. You'd jump in the car and off you'd go. They played everything. Reggae, brand new hip-hop, old hip-hop, everything. That's what I grew up with – people who can work a massive crowd with all kinds of music.

"Acid house came along, and I was astounded. That was Sister Bliss's reformation moment, but I remember when there was a place in London for the music you wanted to hear on any given night, be it Cuban, reggae, whatever. When acid house arrived, if you didn't like acid house, stay the fuck at home! My city had been overtaken by aliens! We used to go Heaven on a Thursday night. There was a girl called Vicky Beats who played hip-hop. From 11 o'clock, the house music started in the main room, but upstairs was Patrick Forge and Gilles Peterson.

"It took years before London regained its true nature, and now thankfully, again, you can go and find enough wonderful types of music rather than just one thing."

CHANGE OUR DESTINY

Maxi continues to DJ himself, recently playing a string of dates in Ireland. However, his primary musical focus is now new band the E-Type Boys, in which he plays guitar and sings. Debut album *Simple… Not Easy* was released last summer and the band recently played a three-night run at the legendary Ronnie Scott's in London. "It's amazing, I can't really describe it," says Maxi, radiating positivity. "It's so new, and so thrilling. Given that I've been a rapper and beat maker for the last 30 or more years, to not go first of all to my record collection if I'm feeling creative for loops, but to pick the guitar up and look for a chord, a progression or a melody – knowing that you can maybe finish it off and make it into something – is so thrilling. It comes directly out of you, filtered through nothing. It comes from that essence of you, and it feels more personal and special.

"If you'd said to me 10 years ago, 'Maxi, you'll be fronting your own guitar band, playing your own songs…' 11 years ago, I wrote my first song and thought 'Okay, well that's a one-off, great,' I never thought I'd make a career out of it, I'd have laughed in your face. "We played at Ronnie Scott's, and they were three of the best shows I've played in my life. You have to impress at Ronnie's – we got a standing ovation every night and on the last night, we were forced to play an encore, which is not allowed. And people were dancing, which is not allowed, and making videos, which is absolutely verboten!"

"It's like when you're just not that guy anymore, you know?" Maxi adds when asked whether this is the definitive end for Faithless. "Faithless was this wonderful thing that we managed to create and sustain for quite a while, but I don't write rhymes over beats anymore. I've got this fascination with guitar and how much stuff you can bring out of yourself. I've got two albums' worth of songs, and there's more to follow, and now it's just about 'I wonder where this is taking me?'" ●

> "I GREW UP WITH WAREHOUSE PARTIES… PEOPLE WHO COULD WORK A MASSIVE CROWD WITH ALL KINDS OF MUSIC"
>
> **MAXI JAZZ**

Brett Anderson
COLLECTED SOLO WORK
DEMON RECORDS

Since Suede's return from the creative ether with 2013's impactful *Bloodsports*, interest in the band has grown significantly, with a series of high-profile festival appearances (not least 2015's barnstorming Glastonbury set) and critical adulation for last year's multimedia masterpiece *Night Thoughts*, revitalising a hungry fanbase. No surprise, then, that the Suede reissuing campaign has been chugging away in earnest over the last few years. On vinyl, we've had Suede's LP box, a 7" singles box and a B-side-and-rarity packed 20th Anniversary edition of 1996's *Coming Up* (reviewed last issue). Despite all that, few would have expected this release: a lavish four-disc collection of frontman Brett Anderson's solo work.

DEMON DAYS
Recorded during the wilderness decade between 2002's creatively stagnant *A New Morning* and the band-proper comeback, the records collected here chart Brett's journey back to something close to greatness.

In his farewell message to fans after the band's 2003 breakup, Anderson wrote: "I need to do whatever it takes to get my demon back," and, true to his word, that's clearly what he set out to do. This boxset shows just how Anderson undertook what must have been an extremely difficult journey, and,

for the most part, represents a musically rich listening experience.

A NEW DAWNING

Though Brett's initial solo foray, 2007's *Brett Anderson*, has a pessimistic, somewhat aggrieved tone lyrically (in particular, the almost adolescent-sounding lead single *Love Is Dead*), the record does reward repeated listening, with some sumptuous string arrangements and infectious songwriting, in particular *To The Winter* and the emotional closer *Song For My Father*. Though not an unconventional record per se, this debut did establish that Brett's solo career would be a different kind of musical ride to the one expected by certain Suede fans.

Stripped down follow-up *Wilderness* signalled this even further, with nary sight nor sound of an electric guitar or live drummer, in their place comes a minimal sonic landscape foregrounding acoustic, piano and string arrangements with an even darker, introspective bent. It was around this time that a swathe of fans lost interest, but it's by no means a bad album, with the magisterial *Back To You* being among the finest songs that Anderson ever composed.

Though it's not an overly exciting record, *Wilderness* certainly has its moments. The incongruously uplifting *Blessed*, macabre *Funeral Mantra* and isolated *P. Marius* pointed the way towards a more interesting future.

HIDDEN GEMS

The real appeal of this four-disc collection lies in Anderson's final two solo records. The outstanding, pastoral beauty of *Slow Attack* and the edgy toughness of *Black Rainbows* – a record bristling with energy and arguably the musical equivalent of a *Rocky*-esqe training montage for Suede's (at that time in-development) *Bloodsports*.

Slow Attack is worthy of particular mention. When it was released back in 2009, it was almost universally ignored by everyone but the most hardcore of Anderson aficionados. It didn't even make the Top 100. However, those expecting the third in a trilogy of generally resentful records are in for a shock. *Slow Attack* is a yearning, textured and staggeringly beautiful album – with a serene, contented Brett Anderson pushing his already dexterous voice, and his talent for melody writing, to new heights.

Tracks such as the delicate opener *Hymn* and the yearning paranoia of *The Hunted* represented Anderson's finest compositions since, probably the late 90s. Elsewhere on the record, the pulsing allure of *Summer*, the classy, nostalgic vignette *Scarecrows And Lilacs* and the polish of the simply gorgeous *Ashes Of Us* reveal an adept, confident songwriter at the peak of his powers. Gone is the withering bitterness often found in the lyrics of many of the songs that made up the first two solo records: in its place comes a detached, contented writer finding renewal in solitude. It stands alone in the Suede/Brett Anderson canon, with piano- and string-led arrangements being the order of the day (co-conceived with versatile creative partner Leo Abrahams). It's also sprinkled with expressive textures and thoughtful guitar tones.

Slow Attack really does define the term 'underrated gem' and is a record that represents an important piece of Brett's journey back from obscurity. It's also the record here that benefits the most from a vinyl release, operating within its own unique sonic universe.

RAINBOW RHYTHMS

The final album in the box, *Black Rainbows*, released in 2011, is also a fantastic listen, though more conventional and band-based (Suede's 2010 comeback show had clearly adrenalised Anderson). The stomping *Brittle Heart*, The *Wild Ones*-recalling *Unsung* and especially the passionate, evocative closer *Possession* stand shoulder to shoulder with the more recent, critically acclaimed Suede fare. For that reason, *Black Rainbows* is the record in this set that newcomers to Anderson's solo work will warm to the most, featuring not just Suede-esqe arrangements, but the return of the more sexually suggestive lyrics that evoke the fey blouse-wearer of the early 90s.

Brett Anderson's solo career has been unfairly maligned, particularly since the revival of 'proper' Suede. So this boxset is a great chance for new fans (and the old that dropped off during this period) to discover this important work, with each album in this set representing critical steps on the road to those recent, barnstorming Suede records. Out of all of the records here, it's *Slow Attack* that is, in our estimation, the creative turning point and the standout of this box.

Listened consecutively, this boxset reveals a captivating narrative of precisely how a songwriter went about saving himself from creative oblivion.

Andy Price

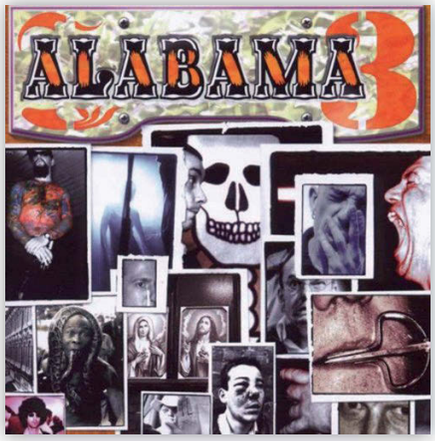
VERDICT

MUSIC

4/5

COLLECTABILITY

3/5



Alabama 3

BACK CATALOGUE

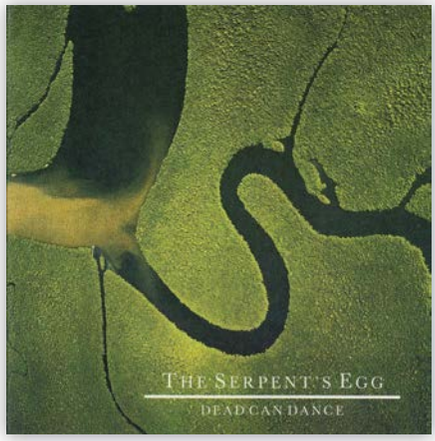
ONE LITTLE INDIAN

Very few bands can claim Irvine Welsh and Stephen King among their fans. And fewer still have had their music featured on both *The Sopranos* and *The Simpsons*. But then Brixton's techno 'n' roll collective Alabama 3 are no ordinary group. Even if the name seems only vaguely familiar, one of their tracks – *Woke Up This Morning* – definitely will, as it became the unlikely choice of TV producer David Chase for the theme tune to *The Sopranos*. Now, their entire back catalogue is reissued on deluxe vinyl. Their 1997 debut *Exile On Coldharbour Lane* has been pressed up on double coloured vinyl, one orange and one green. Follow-up *La Peste* is on double gold vinyl and 2007's *MOR* is on double blue. Their acoustic album, 2003's *Last Train To Mashville, Volume 2* comes on single yellow vinyl, and its follow-up, *Outlaw* is on double silver. 2002's *Power In The Blood* on double red vinyl rounds out the set. Dirty beats, America meets Brixton electro. Recommended. *Ian Peel*

VERDICT

MUSIC 3/5

COLLECTABILITY 4/5



Dead Can Dance

THE SERPENT'S EGG/ AION/SPIRITCHASER

4AD

Like many, the first I ever heard of Dead Can Dance was on one of the greatest compilation albums of the early 90s: 1992's *Lilliput*. Covering the history of 4AD Records, the tracklist now reads like a *Who's Who* of underground psych from the post-New Wave generation: Bauhaus, The The, The Birthday Party, Modern English, This Mortal Coil, Cocteau Twins, Colourbox, Throwing Muses, Ultra Vivid Scene, the list goes on…

DCD contributed *Host Of Seraphim*, the six-minute opening track from fourth album, 1988's *The Serpent's Egg*. It also opens up a trio of new black-vinyl reissues, with *…Egg* joined by 1990's *Aion* (both single discs) and 1996's *Spiritchaser* (a double album that took in percussion from around the globe). With their first four getting the deluxe vinyl treatment last year, that leaves only their final work, 2012's *Anastasis*, awaiting the vinyl treatment. *Ian Peel*

VERDICT

MUSIC 3/5

COLLECTABILITY 3/5

Gilbert O'Sullivan

HIMSELF

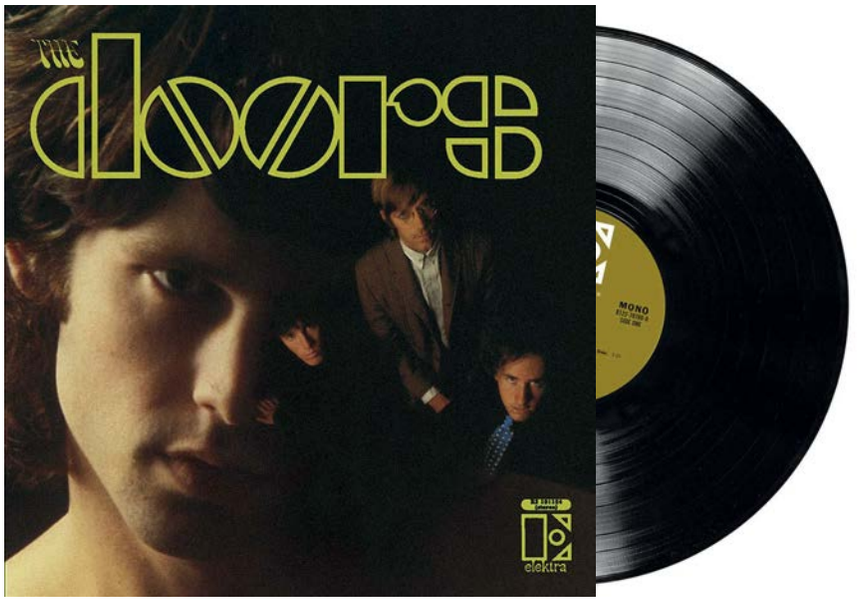
BMG/GRAND UPRIGHT/ UNION SQUARE

Gilbert's debut long player was released in 1971 and includes his first UK hit *Nothing Rhymed* – still the outstanding track on the album. *Himself* was very much the calm before the storm of international fame (O'Sullivan would go on to sell a couple of million copies of the single *Alone Again (Naturally)* the following year). While it perhaps represents the singer in a simpler, more thoughtful mode, there is still plenty of promise. It was the time of his cloth-cap look and tracks like *Matrimony* and *January Twit* saw him explore quirky lyrics and deft arrangements while *Susan Van Heusen* and *January Git* have hooks aplenty pointing to that future of pop hits. The album has been 'meticulously recreated' with the gatefold sleeve featuring O' Sullivan driving a bus full of icons pictured in *Sgt. Pepper…* cut-out fashion. *Himself* is a fine and thoughtful debut from a hit maker who would dominate the charts in the 70s. *Jon Andrews*

VERDICT

MUSIC 4/5

COLLECTABILITY 3/5



The Doors

THE DOORS

RHINO

Hard to believe, but the music of The Doors, which still feels cutting-edge today, is celebrating its 50th anniversary. And vinyl is central to the celebrations, we're pleased to say, with the half-century of their eponymous debut album now marked with a three-CD-plus-LP set.

Within a 12"-square hardback book, you'll find a vinyl edition of the album, recreating the sound of the time by using the original mono mix. There's also a backup of the mono mix on CD, and an additional CD with the stereo mix, remastered for the first time since the late 80s. So, given the sonic advancements since then, it's sounding far superior to its predecessor. A final CD – with a live performance from the group recorded within weeks of the album's original release – rounds out the set.

It may have been released in 1967, but at least three tracks from this album have become completely timeless thanks to their inclusion in movies over the years. So, for me, it's almost impossible to listen to *The End* without thinking of Francis Ford Coppola's *Apocalypse Now*. Similarly, *Break On Through (To The Other Side)* now instantly calls to mind its appearance in *Forrest Gump*, and *Alabama Song* its little cameo in Simon Pegg movie *The World's End*.

If you have an earlier pressing of this album from the 60s, 70s or 80s, it's time to pick up a new one, because it was only on the 40th anniversary that its key track, *Light My Fire*, was cut at the correct speed. As producer Bruce Botnick explained at the time, by studying the 7" single of the song, as well as TV appearances and sheet music, it was found that *…Fire* had been cut 3.5 per cent slower on the album.

The live CD is particularly fascinating and fresh. Performed on 7 March 1967 at a club called The Matrix in San Francisco, it's been released already (back in 2008), but from third-generation tapes. The originals were thought lost and are used here for the first time. The sound quality, considering its age, is quite startling. With no background crowd noise, it's almost eerie; the group playing through the entire album, in order, save for *I Looked At You, End Of The Night* and *Take It As It Comes*, the trio of tracks from the middle of Side B. The 40th Anniversary edition did a good job on the booklet front, especially with its liner notes from Bruce Botnick, but this edition manages to go one step further by adding a host of unseen photographs.

The Doors has sold more than 20 million copies and made an impression on other artists, particularly the New Wave. Both Robyn Hitchcock and Duran Duran (on 1995's *Thank You*) have covered *The Crystal Ship*. And *Break On Through…* has been reworked by both Blondie and U2 (who used the chorus as the bridge to *The Electric Co.* during their '87-era live shows). *Ian Peel*

VERDICT

MUSIC

4/5

COLLECTABILITY

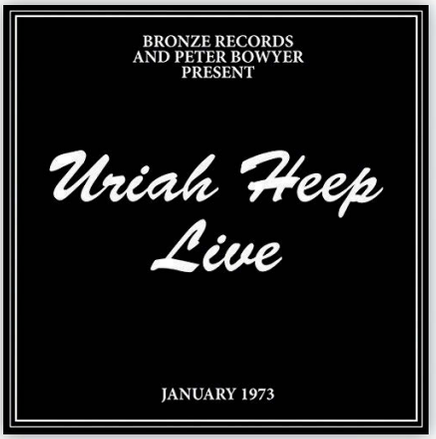
3/5

Madonna
THE IMMACULATE COLLECTION
RHINO US

Rhino US began 2017 with a second round of its annual *Start Your Ear Off Right* campaign, trawling the back catalogue for rare and revered albums to get a Deluxe vinyl makeover, releasing them in batches weekly every Tuesday.

Unlike certain others in the campaign – like the Yes reissue also reviewed this month – this classic compilation was issued only in the US and Canada (though available on import for upwards of £40 in the UK).

Mirroring the striking original cover art, the first disc is on 'marble white' vinyl and the second on gold. All the hits from Madonna's first imperial phase are here, of course, and sequenced in such a way that the immense *Live To Tell* is the grand finale of Side B, while Side D points to the future by gathering together her first forays into post-house, four-to-the-floor beat-backed tracks, such as *Vogue* and *Rescue Me*, and the dub sex of *Justify My Love*. *Ian Peel*



Uriah Heep
LIVE
BRONZE RECORDS

Alongside Black Sabbath, Led Zeppelin and Deep Purple, Uriah Heep are considered by many to be one of the big four British hard-rock legends from the 70s. The boys from Brentford have reissued their first live album from 1973, *Uriah Heep Live* on vinyl and you can hear why they deserve such an accolade.

Originally recorded on 26 January 1973 at the Town Hall in Birmingham this 180g heavyweight double 'splatter' coloured vinyl reissue captures Heep in their Moog synth/guitar-rocking, headbanging prime. As well as classic tracks *Sunrise*, *Sweet Lorraine* and the toe-tapping *Tears In My Eyes*, you're also treated to a cracking rock 'n' roll medley, including *Roll Over Beethoven*, *Blue Suede Shoes* and *Whole Lotta Shakin' Goin' On*.

This riff-heavy release has a great sound and comes packaged with a re-production of the original British tour brochure that will please any Heep aficionado. *John Thackray*

Yes
GOING FOR THE ONE
RHINO US

Another of Rhino US's latest run of reissues – see Madonna's *The Immaculate Collection*, also reviewed – here, we have a limited picture-disc edition of Yes' eighth studio album. First released in 1977, this was the album that really ushered in the group's 80s direction as it dispensed with concepts and decade-long solos. That said, the grandiosity is still here: on the organ intro for *Parallels*, the Spanish-guitar interludes on *Turn Of The Century* and chamber-piano recital that opens *Awaken*.

The album also heralded a new era of Yes sleeve art, as it was the first sleeve that favoured the work of Storm Thorgerson and Hipgnosis instead of our last issue's cover star, Roger Dean. It's also the first time this album has been available on picture disc – for which they've used the 2003 album remasters. And, unlike the Madonna release, which is US-only, this one's available worldwide. *Ian Peel*

VERDICT

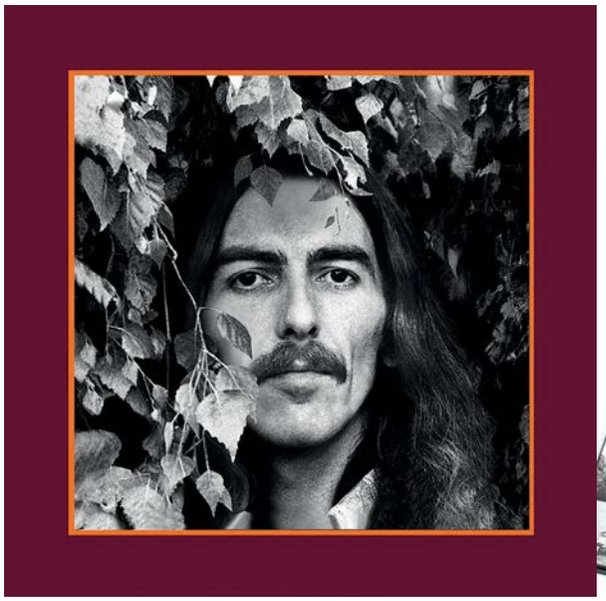
MUSIC ●●●●○ 4/5
COLLECTABILITY ●●●○○ 3/5

VERDICT

MUSIC ●●●○○ 3/5
COLLECTABILITY ●●●●○ 4/5

VERDICT

MUSIC ●●●●○ 4/5
COLLECTABILITY ●●●○○ 3/5



George Harrison
THE VINYL COLLECTION
UNIVERSAL

Certainly the biggest and possibly the best boxset released so far this year, *The Vinyl Collection* was actually racked in the record stores back in February. But we're giving it an honorary write-up alongside the current new releases this issue because, really, how could we ignore such a weighty tome as this? You won't get much change out of £400, but you will get one of the most important canons of modern music in its entirety, on vinyl – and with a few extra surprises.

Everything's here, starting with 1968's *Wonderwall Music* and 1969's *Electronic Sound*, both the by-products of an enquiring, leftfield musical mind, access to all the latest gadgets, and a huge budget, courtesy of Apple Records.

There are the 70s albums, kicking off with his headlong dash away from The Beatles with *All Things Must Pass* (1970) and closing with the content home brew of *George Harrison* (1979). Sandwiched in between are four contrasting attempts to find himself, spiritually and musically, and with varying degrees of success: *Living In The Material World* (1973), *Dark Horse* (1974), *Extra Texture (Read All About It)* (1975) and *Thirty Three & 1/3* (1976). From Harrison's 80s sessions, we have two perfectly formed but completely overlooked works in *Somewhere In England* (1981) and *Gone Troppo* (1982) before he hit a commercial peak (or rather re-hit it, after *All Things Must Pass*) with 1987's *Cloud Nine*.

The final four discs are all good reasons to invest.1992's *Live In Japan* double album has renditions of *Taxman*, *Something* and *Here Comes The Sun,* and 2002's *Brainwashed* ranks alongside Bowie's *Blackstar* as a classic, dramatic swansong. There are also 12" picture discs of *Got My Mind Set On You* and *When We Was Fab*, the latter including the unextended version and a psychedelic Reverse End mix.

There is more to Harrison's solo work than even all this. He was an enthusiastic collaborator, starting off with *The Concert For Bangladesh* via many releases with Ravi Shankar and productions for Apple Records' artists. But all that's worthy of another boxset in its own right and leaving it aside gives this one a singular focus.

As for favourites, there's a lot to choose from here… I've already made my own Best Of on Spotify (haven't we all?) which takes in two anthems for soul searchers from *All Things Must Pass*, *My Sweet Lord* and *Hear Me Lord*, *Here Comes The Moon* from *George Harrison*, a Python-esque commentary on the *My Sweet Lord* court case, *This Song* from *Thirty Three Three & 1/3*, and his final, peaceful farewell, *Marwa Blues* from *Brainwashed*. This is a boxset in the 'heirloom quality' tier.

A life's journey on record and an instant collection of one of rock's most quietly influential songwriters. *Ian Peel*

VERDICT

MUSIC

5/5

COLLECTABILITY

5/5

Fleetwood Mac
TANGO IN THE NIGHT
WARNER BROS

One of the biggest albums of the 80s – which crossed over from blues to rock to pop – *Tango In The Night* was the 14th studio album by the band and was the fifth and final LP from the lineup of Lindsey Buckingham, Stevie Nicks, Christine McVie, John McVie and Mick Fleetwood. It's the latest stop in an ongoing series of vinyl and Deluxe reissues of the Fleetwood Mac catalogue. Last year started off with a triple LP, *In Concert*, which placed on vinyl for the first time the live tracks unearthed for the previous year's Deluxe edition of 1979's *Tusk*. Then, in the summer, we got our hands on the official prequel to *Tango*, a Deluxe boxset of 1982's *Mirage*, which had the album on both vinyl and CD, with additional live and outtakes CDs and a DVD.

This new set takes a similar approach. First and foremost, there's the original 12-track album on vinyl and CD. An extra CD gathers B-sides and bonus tracks, the highlight of which is the original demo for *Big Love* and Stevie Nicks' instrumental B-side for *Seven Wonders*, *Book Of Miracles*. Plus, there's a relatively thin DVD, containing just the five promo videos from the era and a hi-res stereo mix: no concert, EPK or TV footage at all – a disappointment.

They may be on CD, but Rhino Records are clearly cognisant of the fact that the remixes and extended versions, previously only available on vinyl and CD singles, are one of the main draws here. So there's an extra disc dedicated to the 12"s of the era, including the extended versions of *Big Love*, *Seven Wonders* and *Little Lies*, the dub of *Everywhere* and the *I'm A Jazz Man* dub of *Family Man* and more. It's all most welcome and in stark contrast to most rock acts who consign their 80s remixes to the dustbin of history.

Looking back, the singles from this album tell an interesting story. *Big Love* signalled the group's return after a five-year hiatus and carried a tremendous weight of expectation. It didn't disappoint: this was art-house FM rock, guided by Lindsey Buckingham and Riachard Dashut's co-production. *Big Love* reached No. 9 in the UK, and the album went on to generate Top 10 hits with *Little Lies* (No. 5) and *Everywhere* (No. 4). It was the quirky pop side of the group that won over a new audience, as these singles were interspersed with more straightforward rock tracks from the album that didn't fare so well at all. *Big Love* was followed by *Seven Wonders* (No. 56). *Little Lies*' follow up, *Family Man* only reached No. 54. And after highest-selling single *Everywhere* came its lowest selling, the underrated *Isn't It Midnight (*No. 60). While extra platters, live recordings and/or a remixes box would have been more appealing to vinyl fans, this is a great celebration of an album that soundtracked a short period of the 80s on UK radio. *Ian Peel*

VERDICT

MUSIC

4/5

COLLECTABILITY

2/5

94 East
THE EARLIEST RECORDINGS OF PRINCE
CHARLY

It would be easy to write this off before listening to it as a cash in on the purple one's demise, but hold fire just a moment. 94 East was the first band that Prince recorded with (he'd played with at least two bands prior to this) and an outfit led by Pepe Willie who supplies an interesting interview in the sleeve notes. These recordings have been released before, under various guises, but are here together on a triple vinyl 180g boxset with all 17 tracks, including instrumentals. *Better Than You Think* pretty much sums the collection up in terms of its sound and name. The soulful, smooth funk is more about forging a Minneapolis sound rather than a Prince one, but you don't have to listen too hard for the then 17 year old's input – hired even then for his ability to handle multiple instruments. *Just Another Sucker* features all of this playing and a co-writing credit for Prince, so is probably the most welcoming for fans and takes the set beyond the 'just for completists' tag. *Jon Andrews*

VERDICT

MUSIC 3/5

COLLECTABILITY 3/5

Ragnar Grippe
SAND
DAIS

An important purchase for anyone with a collection that takes in Eno, Can and Neu!, or even the likes of Aphex Twin and Squarepusher. One of the most influential ambient albums of all time has reached its 40th anniversary. Originally a student of the Musique Concrète school, the Groupe de Recherches Musicales, Ragnar Grippe's name is usually mentioned in hushed tones alongside pioneers from the influential Shandar label (who originally released this album and his early works) such as Terry Riley and La Monte Young. Four decades later, this sounds surprisingly of the moment – and I would challenge a passing Four Tet fan not to think it's the latest from Kieran Hebden. Essentially two 30-minute collages – *Sand Part One* and *Sand Part Two* across Side A and Side B – catch this one while you can: it's limited to just 500 copies on clear vinyl, and comes with extensive liner notes from the artist himself. *Ian Peel*

VERDICT

MUSIC 4/5

COLLECTABILITY 4/5

T. Rex
THE SLIDER [DELUXE EDITION]
DEMON

Although not a record immune to a reissue or two, this latest take on the third release by the rechristened T. Rex is a delight. Musically allied to its predecessor, *Electric Warrior*, the 13 tracks that make up the main record are packed with euphoric bluster and groove-led glam that's set in motion by *Metal Guru*. Tony Visconti's production delivered a typically grandiose strut to *The Slider* and it's fitting for a record that concludes with the artist singing about himself in the third person on the languorous *Main Man*. Also present is a rare vinyl outing for the alternative take on the album, *Rabbit Fighter*. Comprised of working takes, including some acoustic demos, it's an intriguing, if inessential, listing. Despite being issued on novelty coloured vinyl – silver and red, fact fans – this is a very fine pressing and *The Slider* hasn't sounded this good on wax for some time. *Gareth James*

VERDICT

MUSIC 4/5

COLLECTABILITY 4/5

BNQT
VOLUME 1
BELLA UNION

Midlake haven't been the same since frontman Tim Smith headed off for solo pastures. While Eric Pulido stepped up, multiple alternative realities present themselves with this debut set by indie-supergroup BNQT. Writing and vocal responsibilities are shared between Band Of Horses' Ben Bridwell, Franz Ferdinand's Alex Kapranos, Grandaddy's Jason Lytle, Travis' Fran Healy and Pulido. The classic-rock tinged Americana is largely glorious, despite still feeling a little like a compilation as a result of so many voices. *Unlikely Force* shimmers delicately and *Failing At Feeling* is a grandiose, slow-burning, string-laden slice of vintage Grandaddy. From its opening notes *Mind Of A Man* sounds like a Travis song and *Hey Banana* is propelled on a signature Franz strut. The varying styles coalesce naturally, helped by the rest of Midlake as backing band for the entire record. With its varied pace and stellar cast, *Volume 1* is a joyous debut, topped with perfect artwork. *Gareth James*

VERDICT

MUSIC 4/5

COLLECTABILITY 3/5

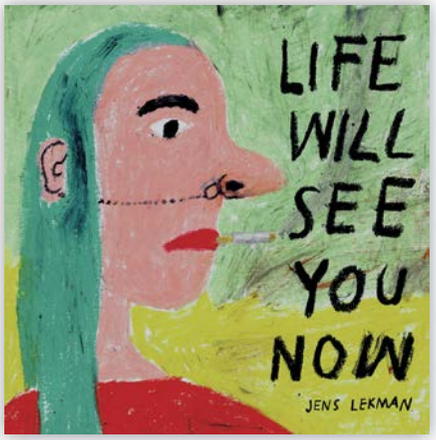
Father John Misty
PURE COMEDY
BELLA UNION

Melodious misanthrope Father John Misty has more than a whiff of the wilfully obtuse about his tendency to occupy certain positions in public discourse. Whether it's attempting to take down Ryan Adams in musical form for his cover of Taylor Swift's *1989*, or mentioning the latter star in *Total Entertainment Forever* as the unfortunate subject of VR sex, in the aftermath of Kanye's lyrical misstep, he does seem to be alternative music's outsider troll figure. Railing against our acquiescence to technology, the lyrics are at least interesting, but after the critical acclaim showered over this record's predecessor, the drowsy Elton John-esque backing can be arduous. The outsider shtick might help to sell records, but the music could work harder to assist. The aluminium and copper-tinged Deluxe vinyl edition at least bring colour to proceedings. *Gareth James*

VERDICT

MUSIC 3/5

COLLECTABILITY 5/5



Jens Lekman
LIFE WILL SEE YOU NOW
SECRETLY CANADIAN

Jens Lekman's fourth album is a near-perfect masterclass in narrative pop. Having faded from view a little with 2012's low-key *I Know What Love Isn't* and with a completed album of songs rejected by his label, Lekman worked with Ewan Pearson on 10 tracks that traverse genres and rapidly melt your heart. *Evening Prayer* is a remarkably joyous track about supporting a friend who now takes a 3D-printed model of a recently removed tumour everywhere with him; while *Hotwire The Ferris Wheel* is a genuinely soulful collaboration with Tracey Thorn. *How We Met, The Long Version* is heavily built on an obscure Jackie Stoudemire disco sample and is as close as Lekman will ever get to indulging his inner *Daft Punk*. As is often the case with Secretly Canadian, the vinyl pressing is unremarkable: but the glorious music found within the grooves more than makes up for it. *Life Will See You Now* is an early highlight of 2017. *Gareth James*

VERDICT

MUSIC 5/5

COLLECTABILITY 2/5

Bob Dylan
TRIPLICATE
COLUMBIA

"I am finding these great songs to be a tremendous source of inspiration," Bob Dylan says of the tracks he's chosen to cover for this new project, "that has led me to one of my most satisfying periods in the studio". The sessions have certainly been prolific, with this new release – his 38th studio album – containing 30 songs. You can choose between a Standard edition three-LP set at around £20 or a pricier, investment-grade Deluxe package at £50. The packaging of the Deluxe echoes the era that gave us the songs Dylan covers, with a photo album-type format, with slots for each disc bound into the central spine – exactly as albums (hence the term itself!) were at the dawn of the vinyl era.

The fun with *Triplicate* will come from comparing Dylan's interpretations of old standards with their best-known versions. He tackles *Stormy Weather* – hitherto immortalised by Billie Holiday – on LP One (entitled *'Til The Sun Goes Down*). On *Devil Dolls* (LP Two), Dylan wrestles with *The Best Is Yet To Come*, fighting the spectre of Frank Sinatra who recorded it in 1946 with a little help from Count Basie and Quincy Jones. And on LP Three (*Comin' Home Late*), he tackles *Sentimental Journey*, as also covered by Ringo Starr back in 1970. The songs in the Great American Songbook may be finite, but the interpretations are limitless. *Ian Peel*

VERDICT

MUSIC 3/5
COLLECTABILITY 4/5

David Bowie
NO PLAN EP
RCA

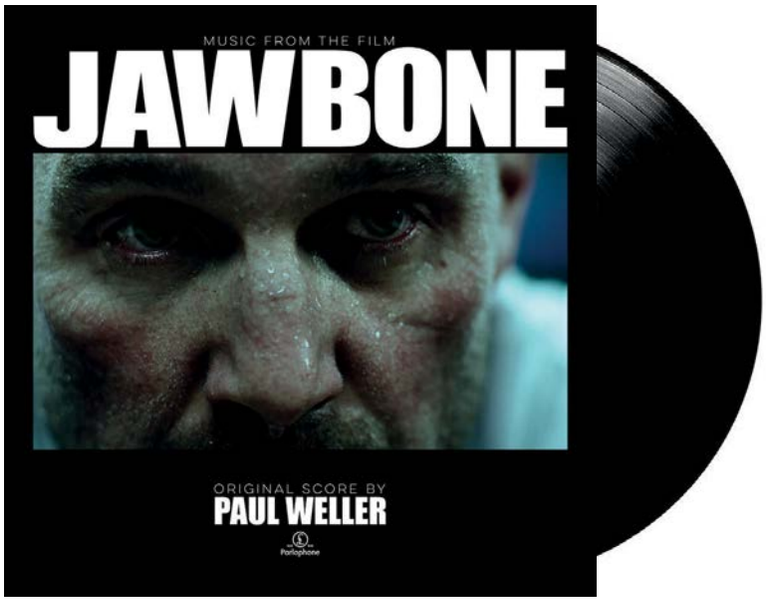
The story of the *No Plan EP* started off back on 8 January, when a video for the title track appeared online on what would have been Bowie's 70th birthday. This month sees a limited-edition black vinyl 12" and next month will see a limited made-to-order edition: a die-cut white vinyl with an artwork lithograph, there will only ever be one run of this edition, which will come in a numbered die-cut sleeve. Both versions feature four tracks you'll probably already know from buying the *Lazarus Cast Album*: *No Plan*, *Lazarus*, *When I Met You* and the lyrically intense *Killing A Little Time*.

How exactly will the white vinyl be limited? "Made-to-order means that this vinyl will be produced to satisfy the amount of orders received," Bowie's team explains. "Pre-orders will only be taken for a limited time, and though it makes sense to order early, the sleeve will be numbered randomly."

No Plan is definitely the outstanding track on here and a curious title for a song, video and EP which – much like all of *Blackstar* – seems to have been purposefully plotted and devised before Bowie passed away, as if he was planning his last artistic flourishes. Or maybe there was no plan at all… we'll never know. *Ian Peel*

VERDICT

MUSIC 4/5
COLLECTABILITY 4/5



Paul Weller

JAWBONE, MUSIC FROM THE FILM

PARLOPHONE

Jawbone is Paul Weller's first film score – the soundtrack to Thomas Napper's semi-autobiographical tale of the struggle of a former boxing champion played by Johnny Harris, with strong support from Ray Winstone and Ian McShane. This is unlike anything Weller's ever committed to vinyl, and it's also quite different to most film soundtracks, in that it was developed long before any footage was even shot.

One read of Johnny Harris' script (the lead actor also wrote and co-produced the movie) was enough to get Weller on board, long before there was cast, crew or even a release date. From there, they traded ideas, developing music and pictures in tandem with each other, one inspiring the other as they went along.

The 21-minute opening track *Jimmy / Blackout* is a grandiose and absorbing sound collage. Largely instrumental (there's no hint of a recognisable vocal for over 15 minutes), this is to Paul Weller's discography what *Two Virgins* is to John Lennon's (or what *Wonderwall Music* was to George Harrison's). There are choirs, heavy guitars, synth drones and more, all buried into an unsettling mix which masks the more pastoral, string-driven piece *Man On Fire* seem all the more traditional.

Perhaps the most familiar song, for fans of Weller's back catalogue, will be *The Ballad Of Jimmy McCabe*. A simpler, acoustic folk piece (though with a nice dialogue sample dropping in at the end), it's an anthem for the central character. The title track spells out where this set is coming from, sounding like a long-lost Hendrix 60s jam with added spikes of dialogue between the central character and his trainer. Two other tracks – *Jawbone Training* and the finale, *End Fight Sequence* – are the background to boxing footage, but aren't quite what you'd expect. Rather than beat-heavy, pulse-heavy instrumentals, Weller has gone down a more jazzy route (although the Style Council this is not) laced with intimidating percussion and dialogue drop-ins of Ray Winstone.

There's something about this project that feels very similar in spirit to Matt Johnson of The The's recent work. Like Weller, Johnson has eschewed the traditional guitar-based songs that he's well known for, in favour of largely instrumental, experimental and minimalist soundtrack constructs. And, like Weller, these have been to accompany dark, gritty cinematic tales of modern-day struggles. So if *Jawbone* grabs you, check out The The's soundtracks for 2010's *Tony* and 2015's *Hyena*, the later of which was afforded a blue-vinyl edition on Death Waltz.

That this Paul Weller album is like nothing he's ever done before makes it infinitely more attractive. And for someone to take such a left turn this far into their career is something that has to be admired. *Ian Peel*

VERDICT

MUSIC

4/5

COLLECTABILITY

3/5

Jamiroquai
AUTOMATON
VIRGIN/EMI

The 2006 singles compilation *High Times* highlighted Jay Kay's knack for a glorious hook and *Automaton* often harks back to the squelchy rumble of late-90s and early noughties Jamiroquai for its inspiration. The lyrics are still often faintly embarrassing, but there are some fine pieces of electro-soul on show. Bold, jazzy piano coupled with a pretty righteous bassline on *Vitamin* makes for a fairly euphoric highlight, while *Superfresh* is a frenetic collision of crazed funk and robotic vocals that feels like several songs playing at the same time. It's bizarrely fascinating, managing to be simultaneously original and yet instantly familiar because of the band's trademark sound. Released on double vinyl to ensure more sizeable grooves, the songs benefit from the warmth of the format. While it might not restore them to the heady musical heights of *The Return Of The Space Cowboy*, *Automaton* may well reignite some fond friendships of old. *Gareth James*

VERDICT

MUSIC 3/5

COLLECTABILITY 3/5

Laura Marling
SEMPER FEMINA
MORE ALARMING

Marling's sixth album has more than a touch of the composed, intense brevity of *I Speak Because I Can* and is a record that considers female identity and relationships between women. *Wild Fire* is a beautifully executed piece of Laurel Canyon soul, while *The Valley* attempts to understand another woman's palpable sense of loss. *Next Time* reflects on regret in delicate acoustic tones before a manic, fuzzy string break suggests it may not be so easy to banish the ghosts. Blake Mills produces and his fondness for pushing familiar sounds beyond their natural confines has a subtle but defining impact. It concludes with the melodic crunch of *Nothing, Not Nearly* and a swooning chorus before an abrupt end. Initial copies include a bonus disc, featuring the album played live complete with the loose, spiky magic of Marling's early work. *Gareth James*

VERDICT

MUSIC 4/5

COLLECTABILITY 5/5

Nelly Furtado
THE RIDE
NELSTAR MUSIC

I don't think I'm the only one for whom Nelly Furtado had fallen off the radar. But the fact that her new album – her sixth, believe it or not – is issued this month on double clear vinyl, gave me a chance to put her back on my turntable and find out where she's at. And it's clearly an interesting intersection of punk versus pop, courtesy of a pairing with producer John Congleton (whose credits include Explosions in the Sky and Franz Ferdinand) and – more tellingly, I guess, as to Nelly's proposed direction here – St. Vincent and Blondie. Highlights include the downtempo single *Pipe Dreams* and the midtempo electro of *Cold Hard Truth*, perfect for fans of early 90s artists like Sophie B. Hawkins, Paula Cole or *99.9F°*-era Suzanne Vega. Also check online for some bundle editions of the clear vinyl, which are signed and add merch and a 'Lyric Zine'. *Ian Peel*

VERDICT

MUSIC 3/5

COLLECTABILITY 3/5

You'll Never Get To Heaven

IMAGES

YELLOW K

Canadian dream-pop duo You'll Never Get To Heaven are made for analogue formats. This, their third album, is available on vinyl and cassette and comes as they finally break from the occasional festival date and gear up for their first ever European and North American tours. The brainchild of the classically trained pianist Alice Hansen and producer Chuck Blazevic, You'll Never Get To Heaven came onto the radar with 2014's *Adorn* album and breakthrough single *Caught In A Time, So Far Away*.

Perfect for fans of slightly screwball pop fantasists such as The Flaming Lips or another art-house duo, The Bird And The Bee, there's also a surprisingly (and possibly completely coincidental) similarity between *White Light* and The Alan Parsons Project's *To One In Paradise*. *Ian Peel*

VERDICT

MUSIC 3/5

COLLECTABILITY 3/5

Status Quo

THE VINYL SINGLES COLLECTION 1972 – 1979

UNIVERSAL

June 2016's *The Vinyl Collection 1972 – 1980* set out 10 albums – from 1972's *Piledriver* to 1980's *Just Supposin'* – in exact replica 180-gram pressings. In February, we dived headlong into its follow-up *The Vinyl Collection 1981 – 1996*, which ran from 1981's *Never Too Late* up to 1996's *Don't Stop*, throwing in *The Other Side Of Status Quo* B-sides compilation. With those on file, we're ready to dive into the next, and most certainly not the last, we are assured, Quo boxset: *The Vinyl Singles Collection 1972 – 1979*. This serves up 13 7" singles, exact replicas of everything you would have found filed under 'S' in the WHSmith record bar for the duration of the 70s. And when you listen back to singles like 1977's *Rockin' All Over The World* and 1979's *Whatever You Want* and then spin back to 1973's *Caroline*, it's very clear: the credibility has always been there, but perhaps we were just too blindsided by this boxset's proposed follow-up (the 80s years) to realise it? *Ian Peel*

VERDICT

MUSIC 4/5

COLLECTABILITY 4/5

LONG LIVE VINYL CHOICE

Richard Barbieri

PLANETS + PERSONA

KSCOPE

Prog-heads will know Richard Barbieri from his ongoing work with Porcupine Tree and fans of classic pop will of course know his work as co-founder of Japan. But for someone with such an extensive discography, *Planets + Persona* is only Barbieri's third solo album. It takes in both vintage analogue synthesisers and acoustic performances, and even jazz elements.

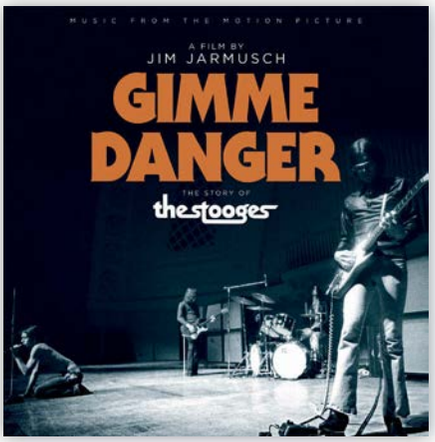
As such, all shades of Barbieri's previous work are evident, from Rain Tree Crow to The Dolphin Brothers.

It's quite a journey, from the glitch of opener *Solar Sea* via the dark, Japan-esque *New Found Land*, to the more uplifting *Night Of The Hunter* and the tense *Interstellar Medium* before signing off with the jazzy *Solar Storm*. The vinyl version of this album comes in a gatefold sleeve which perfectly showcases the album art and photography of some stunning Icelandic ice caves. And it's been mastered for vinyl by Simon Heyworth at 45 rpm and is pressed on 180-gram. *Ian Peel*

VERDICT

MUSIC 4/5

COLLECTABILITY 5/5



Various Artists

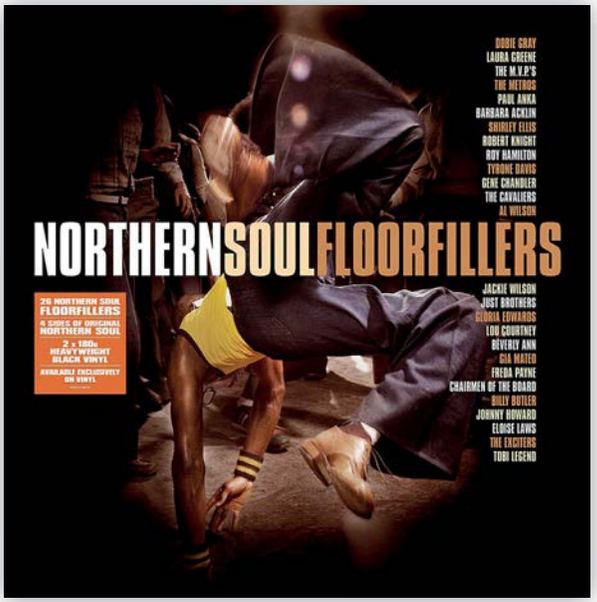
GIMME DANGER, MUSIC FROM THE MOTION PICTURE

RHINO

"Our love letter to possibly the greatest band in rock 'n' roll history," is how Jim Jarmusch describes *Gimme Danger*, his recent documentary about Iggy Pop and The Stooges. The film left theatres for the world of Netflix in January and the soundtrack went onto Spotify that same month. In February, it was released on CD, but the vinyl edition has been held held back until 7 April. Which is rather annoying, considering our version is actually shorter than its CD counterpart. Keeping the release to just one LP meant that, of the CD and streaming version's 14 tacks, four are missing here. But although The Stooges' *Little Doll* has been left off, we're afforded the vinyl debut of the outtake *Lost In The Future* and a more concise listening experience as related tracks by MC5, The Iguanas and the Prime Movers Blues Band are all edited out. *Ian Peel*

VERDICT

MUSIC
●●●●● 3/5
COLLECTABILITY
●●●●● 2/5



Various Artists

NORTHERN SOUL FLOOR FILLERS

DEMON

These two slabs of classic singles offer an instant entry point into the breezy beats and dancefloor mayhem that is Northern Soul. It includes a smattering of artists who had a profile outside of the Northern niche – singers like Paul Anka (with 1966 single *I Can't Help Lovin' You*), plus Jackie Wilson (*The Who Who Song*), and Freda Payne (what else but *Band Of Gold*?).

If I had to pick one highlight from each of the four sides, I'd go with the Detroit soul of The Metros' *Since I Found My Baby*, the future funk of Tyrone Davis' *Turn Back The Hands Of Time*, Gloria Edwards' *My Love Keeps Getting Stronger* and from Side D, Tobi Legend's melodramatic *Time Will Pass You By*.

It all sounds like a double-vinyl version of the *Paul Miller Soul Show* on BBC radio. Highlights also come in the form of the originals that went on to become hits as cover versions. Like the the pre-Joyce Simms *Love Makes A Woman* by Barbara Acklin, the pre-Kylie Minogue *Give Me Just A Little More Time* by The Chairmen Of The Board, and a pre-Sinitta *Love On A Mountain Top* by Robert Knight. You can play 'spot the sample' with many of the tracks: Fatboy Slim plundered the Just Brothers' *Sliced Tomatoes* for *The Rockafeller Skank*; and Shirley Ellis's *Soul Time* appeared in The Go! Team's *Bottle Rocket*.

These vinyls are as you would hope: two 180-gram platters in a gatefold sleeve. But, other than that, the presentation is minimalist. There are no liner notes and no sleeve or label photos of any of these classic 7"s. Which is a shame, as they always looked as good as they sounded. The compilation kicks off with Dobie Gray's *Out On The Floor*, for example, which on its original release had a funky orange label showing off the classic Charger Records logo. Likewise, the Just Brothers' *You've Got The Love To Make Me Over* from Side C was released on Music Merchant in 1972, so had cool pale-blue labels with a purple Music Merchant logo.

But maybe all this is for another time, or another project. Northern Soul Floor Fillers is all about the music, and the vibe. *Ian Peel*

VERDICT

MUSIC
●●●●● 3/5
COLLECTABILITY
●●●●● 3/5

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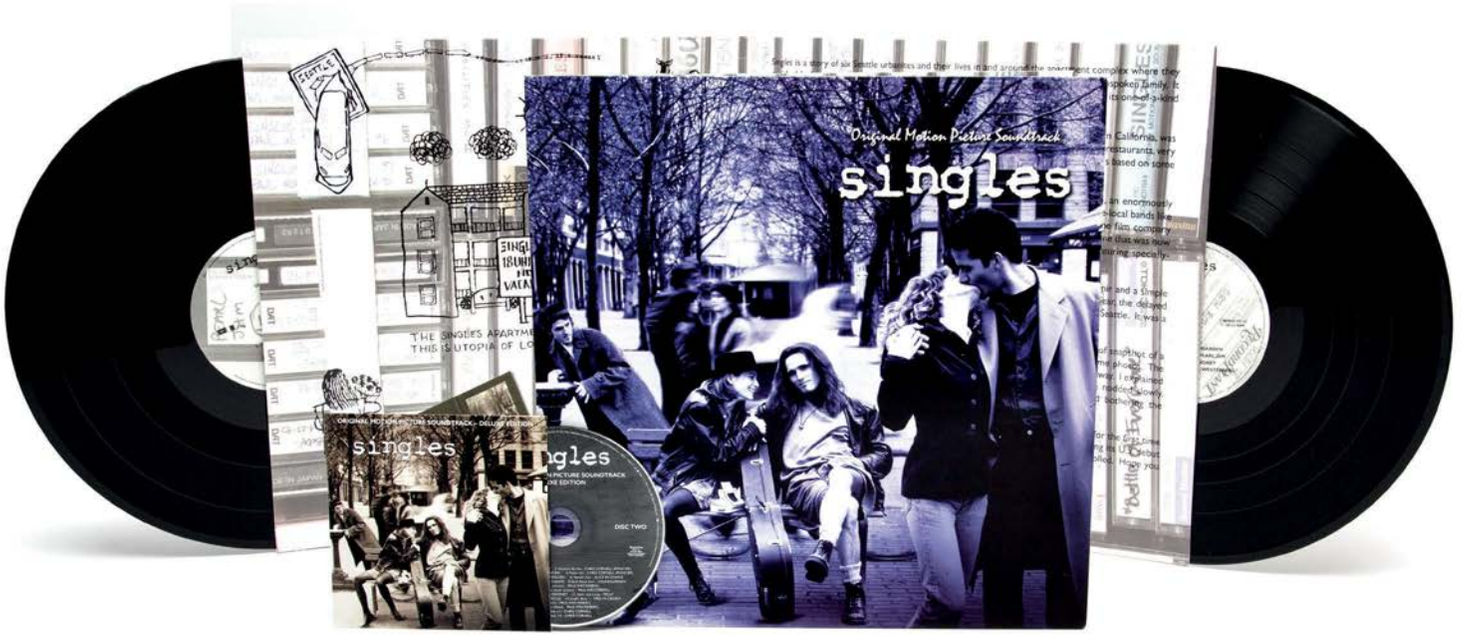

Various Artists

SINGLES, ORIGINAL MOTION PICTURE SOUNDTRACK

SONY LEGACY UK

Cameron Crowe's groundbreaking romantic comedy *Singles* defined the early 90s, both from a cinematic point of view (could you have a more 1992 cast than Bridget Fonda and Matt Dillon?) and from a musical point of view. The *Singles* soundtrack was the US equivalent of the UK's *Trainspotting*: every 90s home had one.

The original edition of the *Singles* soundtrack was a go-to for grunge. Fonda and Dillon's story was set in Seattle, so Crowe looked to the city's emergent alt.rock scene for his soundtrack and found soon-to-be-massive groups like Pearl Jam, Alice In Chains and Soundgarden.

"The album itself was always designed to be sort of an anti-soundtrack, more like a souvenir and a simple mix-tape of some of Seattle's finest," Cameron Crowe explains. "It really is and was a tribute to those hard-working bands that welcomed me to their city with open arms, and the music so many still love so much."

The highlights? Alice In Chains' *Would?* which, back then, sounded threatening and, now, feels like a drifting REM album track; Paul Westerberg's two contributions *Dyslexic Heart* and *Waiting For Somebody*; and Soundgarden's ruthless, relentless agit-pop of *Birth Ritual*. Respite comes in the form of the only retro track: The Jimi Hendrix Experience's *May This Be Love*.

An album that everyone would have originally had on CD, these and another eight tracks are now reissued on double vinyl, in slip rather than gatefold sleeve. Tucked inside you'll find a bonus CD. Yes, CD: this is one of those annoying vinyl reissues where the bonus material is on a completely different format.

On it you'll find a further 18 tracks, all of which offer not only a fascinating second look at the music of *Singles*, but which also makes for, possibly, a more varied and exciting listening experience than the main set. There are score pieces from Soundgarden's Chris Cornell, acoustic renditions from Paul Westerberg, live tracks from Alice In Chains, a demo from Mudhoney, and tracks from two groups who missed the original soundtrack cut completely: *Heart And Lungs* by Truly and *Six Foot Under* by Blood Circus.

There's also a curio at the top of the set: a first release for *Touch Me, I'm Dick*, the song performed by Citizen Dick, the movie's fictional band fronted by Matt Dillon and backed by three members of Pearl Jam, Eddie Vedder, Stone Gossard and Jeff Ament.

All of which would have made a highly desirable third (and possibly fourth) platter of vinyl. But, until then, it's frustrating to report that, nostalgia aside, the most exciting music on this special vinyl release is, bizarrely, on CD.

Ian Peel

VERDICT

MUSIC

4/5

COLLECTABILITY

2/5

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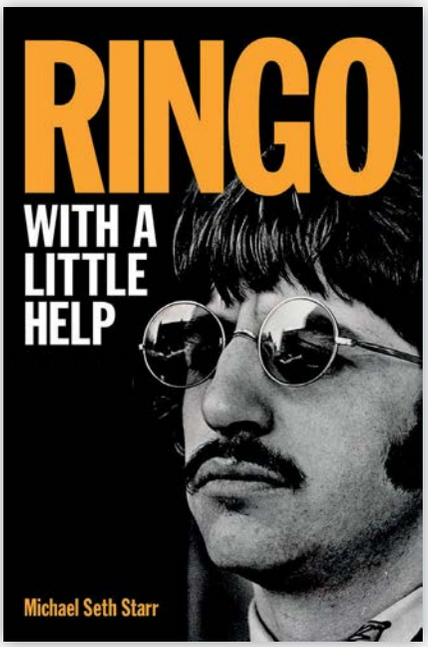


Ringo: With A Little Help

MICHAEL SETH STARR

The very first in-depth biography of everyone's favourite drummer (right?) doesn't offer anything groundshakingly new to The Beatles narrative, but it does make for an interesting, often unheard perspective. The most interesting aspects of Michael Seth Starr's (no relation) book focus on the chapters that prefigure Beatlemania: Ringo's childhood and early years in Liverpool haven't had much focus previously, but here, Starr (the author!) goes into detail on the life of the young Richard Starkey by pulling in interviews, quotes and soundbites to illustrate the homelife and social context Starkey grew up in. Clearly, The Beatles-centric chapters are the heart of the book, but it's here that Ringo's perspective gets a bit lost and Starr can't help but direct some attention towards songwriting powerhouses Lennon and McCartney. The prose doesn't exactly sparkle, but it's worth a read for the Beatles devotee, for the unique focus alone. *Andy Price*

VERDICT

3/5

LONG LIVE VINYL CHOICE

Back To Black: Amy Winehouse's Only Masterpiece

DONALD BRACKETT

At first glance, the title of this book may appear a little on the contentious side – that is, before it dawns on you that Winehouse's life was tragically cut short after she had only released two studio albums proper. This book focuses on the neo-soul of her sophomore, and final, record, *Back To Black*, while generally avoiding delving too much into the over-reported darker side of Amy's personal life.

Yes, while most accounts of Amy's life might have a lazier, tabloid-esque approach, this book, written well by culture critic Donald Brackett, does spend the majority of its focus on her musical lineage, influences and the creative process behind *Back To Black*. It also focuses helpfully on the live shows from that period and the vitally important music videos that helped broadcast to the world the iconic Winehouse image.

Amy's transformation from the somewhat naïve singer/songwriter of the debut *Frank* to the high-barnetted vocal marvel is a fascinating, almost Ziggy Stardust-like evolution that makes for riveting reading. The book also goes into detail on the relationship between (the now world-famous) producer Mark Ronson and Winehouse, which illuminates several of the creative wrangles and personality-based tensions involved with the record's genesis.

So, if you're expecting just another prurient warts-and-all exposé of Amy's notorious personal life, then this isn't the book you were looking for. Instead, this is a musically focused account, which has been written with clear enthusiasm, and one that redirects the focus of the Winehouse legend back to the brilliant but all-too-brief musical career of a true vocal great. *Andy Price*

VERDICT

5/5

WILSON BENESCH
CIRCLE 2 TURNTABLE
WITH DYNAVECTOR CARTRIDGE & NAIM AMPLIFICATION

£3,990 *wilson-benesch.com – put through its paces at winchesterhifi.co.uk*

For the price of a decent new car, and plugged into a test system the price of a family four-door, **Ian Peel** expected to hear more than just mere music... But did he?

With R&D dating back to 1989 and with all design and manufacture in-house at its Sheffield HQ, Wilson Benesch has set out to redesign what a turntable should look like in order to redesign how it should sound. To test its latest creation, a suitably upmarket system was assembled by the team at *Long Live Vinyl*'s test centre, Winchester HiFi. We tested the turntable with a DV-20X2 L/H cartridge by Dynavector (£729) and a two-box amplifier system by Naim: the NAC-N 272 pre-amp/streamer (£3,469) paired with a NAP 250 DR power amp (£3,860). A two-part phono stage – that's the preamp between turntable and amplifier – rounded out the system with a Concert Stage (£695) and a Stage Power (£795), both by Attwood Audio. We also used Wilson Benesch loudspeakers: a pair of Vertexes (£4,650) and a Torus sub-woofer (£6,240) or, as they describe it, an 'infrasonic generator'. Limiting the sub to a maximum of 30Hz added a perfect hint of bass to vocals and really brought to life bluesy double bass – more of which in a moment.

In short, we'd built the ultimate hi-fi. And you could feel it – and a weight of expectation – as soon as you lifted the carbon-fibre tone arm. It felt scary and a little odd do so at first, on account of the arm being practically weightless. But after a few tries, it felt so natural. At the rear of the arm is something you see only on a system of this level – a small weight, the size and shape of a ball bearing, dangling on a piece of thread. It rose gradually during the course of playing an album, which was a clue to its use: it's there to counteract the side-force of the needle being pulled – as opposed to just gliding – towards the centre of the record, thus keeping it always perfectly upright and in place.

We threw four very varied test discs at this system. To begin with, a spin of the (33 rpm) 12" single of New Order's *Ruined In A Day*, from 1993. It sounded a little crunchy, with lots of middle, but when the vocals came in they were as close to 'live' as you could imagine. It was almost like having Bernard Sumner appear in the room singing to a backing track. For a 70s/80s test, we jumped into Side 2 of Brian Eno's *More Blank Than Frank* and heard a bassline in *No One Receiving* I'd never clocked before.

For something more up to date, we tried the Norah Jones-esque Americana of Applewood Road, from vinyl specialist label, Gearbox. And this is where the Circle 25 started to come into its own. Yes, there were pops and crackles on the vinyl, but this turntable completely audibly differentiated them from the music. The build quality and materials used allowed you to hear (and focus on and enjoy) what the cartridge was receiving, as opposed to how the tone arm was physically reacting to the surface.

ANOTHER DIMENSION

Our final test took the Circle 25 into another dimension, and crystallised its appeal. We initially only played Silva Screen's recent reissue of *The Soundhouse* – a 1983 compilation of sample-based electronica by the BBC Radiophonic Workshop – because its fluorescent-green vinyl would look good on the platter. But when we heard it, it was uncanny. On tracks like Paddy Kingsland's incidental music for *The Hitchhiker's Guide To The Galaxy*, the bass was prominent but not potent and synthesiser whooshes that should have sounded tinny in this day and age sounded cinematic. The only other way to achieve an experience like this would be to wire up the original synths and plug them straight into your speakers. The net effect? We were shot back in time almost 35 years and allowed to put on a pair of BBC Radiophonic engineer's headphones.

So, yes, you'd expect an incredibly high level of sound quality with a turntable of this price. But you also get something we didn't expect, that we thought money couldn't buy. We got time travel. ●

VERDICT

PROS

- STAGGERING LOOKS
- BUILD QUALITY
- ULTRA HIGH-END COMPONENTS
- CARBON-FIBRE TONE ARM
- SPECIAL WEIGHTING SYSTEM

CONS

- THE PRICE, THOUGH WE CAN BUT DREAM
- TONE ARM REQUIRES A VERY STEADY HAND

SCORE

33/33⅓

REGA PLANAR 3 TURNTABLE

WITH REGA BRIO AMP AND NEAT MOTIVE SX1 SPEAKERS

£625 *www.rega.co.uk – rigorously tested at winchesterhifi.co.uk*

Ian Peel investigates a slightly higher-than-entry-level turntable aimed at the returning vinyl lover who's after quality for a reasonable outlay

Rega's new Planar 3 is perfect if you're getting back into vinyl and hi-fi after having a few decades off to concentrate on other things. It's robust and well built, but still looks the business. It's also very easy to set up: with built-in phono leads and a factory-fitted cartridge, it's just a case of plugging in the AC adaptor, removing the (included as standard) perspex lid – if you want to follow the fashion for topless, that is – and you're up and running.

To get the best out of the system, you'd be well advised to buy from a dealer rather than online. Then you can have them balance the tone arm and set the tracking weight for you, before you install it into your system at home. It shouldn't take them more than about 15 minutes.

As is the norm these days, only the essential controls are on display – and even those are hidden away. So you'll find the start-stop switch tucked under the bottom left-hand corner of the deck. It plays at both 33 rpm and 45 rpm and switching from one to another is a manual process. You lift off your mat, lift off the glass platter and move the – somewhat delicate – drive belt from one notch to another. Not a quick job if you're ploughing through a mixture of singles and albums, but a typically Rega method: simple, hidden away, but allowing you to get inside the machine and get a little hands-on.

We didn't pull any punches when putting this turntable to the test. First out of the rack: a very well-worn original copy of Peter Gabriel's second eponymous solo album – aka *Scratch* – from 1978.

We took the needle inland and went straight for track three, *Mother Of Violence*, as it's by far the sparsest, quietest song on the whole album – possibly in Gabriel's entire cannon. The Planar 3 coped surprisingly well.

Mother is a simple piano-and-guitar track and I don't think I'd ever heard the piano any clearer (and that's having experienced both the 'mini vinyl' CD reissues from the early Noughties, as well as the more recent 45 rpm half-speed remastered vinyl editions).

PLANET OF SOUND

Next up, Silva Screen's silver-vinyl reissue of the BBC's *The Living Planet* soundtrack. I wasn't hearing too much bass here (more a reflection on the music and its era). So while the Planar 3 wrestled with the archaic feel of some tracks, in others, it really enhanced it; overall, *The Living Planet* sounded as 3D and cinematic as you'd hope.

We teamed the deck up with a Brio amp (£598) also from Rega, a pair of Motive SX1 speakers by Neat, and racked the separates up some appropriately named Special Branch wooden furniture from Isoblue (£250 per tier). With the cable for the turntable being captive (ie, integrally wired into the hardware at the business end), the only wiring needed was for the speakers, for which we used some Rega Duet. We also used a carbon-fibre anti-static disc cleaner, the Goldring Exstatic (that's a dust brush, to you and I) from the team at our test centre, Winchester HiFi.

Listening to the system as a whole, both albums had a lot of space, and the silence in between tracks – as much a part of the hi-fi test experience as the actual music – was handled with aplomb. Curiously, the dust and crackle of the '78 Gabriel merged into the

music, while the Rega could audibly separate any specs of noise on the '16 Silva Screen.

The Planar 3 is noticeably superior to, say, the Planar 1. That more entry-level model has a phenolic resin – aka plastic – platter, as opposed to the 3's heavy glass. And it has a rather flimsy mat compared to the the model we tested. So you can physically feel where your extra investment is going. Available in black or white, with – as we go to press – a red version (akin to the near-burgundy of the Planar 1) just announced, the Planar 3 is a fashion-conscious model, but it's not an airhead. Or a triumph of style over substance. It's a turntable that's aware of the vinyl revival and is here to relish it, as opposed to exploit it. ●

VERDICT

PROS

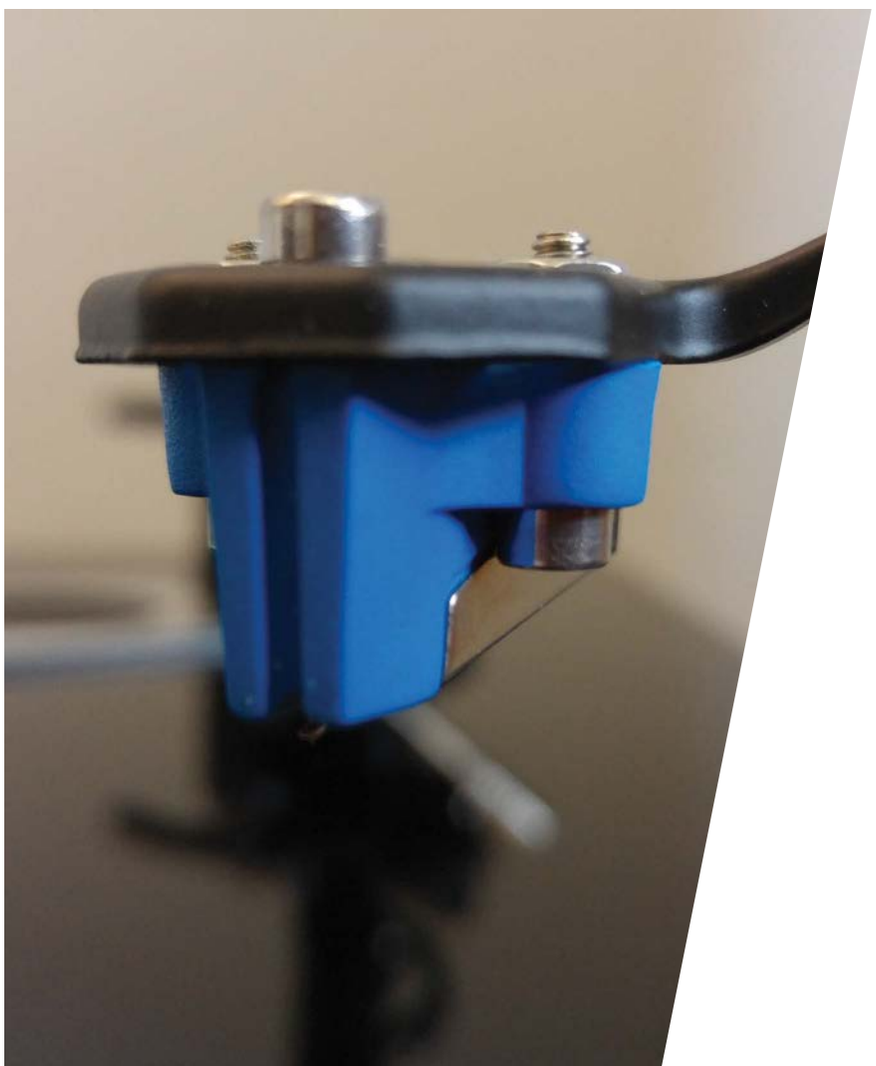
- LOOKS SOLID, FEELS SOLID
- HIGH-END SOUND
- EVERYTHING INCLUDED
- GLASS PLATTER
- EASY TO SET UP

CONS

- BELT FEELS A LITTLE FLIMSY
- SPEED CHANGE FAFF
- ULTRA-GLOSS FINISH WON'T HIDE ANY DUST OR SMUDGES

SCORE

26/33 1/3



My favourite vinyl
WENDY JAMES

Currently working on a unique picture-disc project, the former Transvision Vamp-turned-solo artist selects her eight most-treasured LPs **Ian Peel**

FUN HOUSE 1970
THE STOOGES

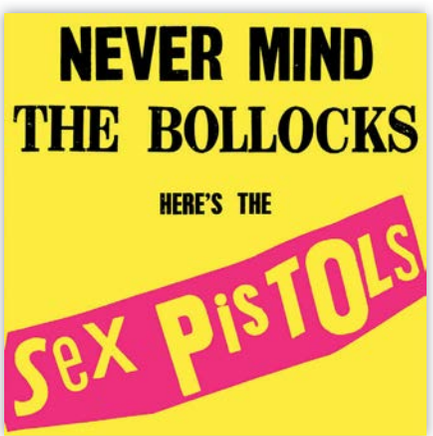
"The Stooges are my touchstone sound, my barometer of performance. They were so ahead of their time and the sounds they got together, informed by all band members being fans of the history of rock 'n' roll and transmitted through their own world of Ann Arbor in the mid 60s… Perfect, and the look too! The ultimate."

LOADED 1970
THE VELVET UNDERGROUND

"Every song is so damn good. Lou Reed's songwriting is in my blood. I get his timing, I get his delivery. Once again, the Velvets are so ahead of their time and, in their case, channelling their complete fandom and fascination with so many types of music – but through the prism of their East Coast lives."

BLONDE ON BLONDE 1966
BOB DYLAN

"How many nights did I listen to this vinyl go around as a young teenager, late into the night, lights out in my bedroom, just listening to the sweet sound of Bob Dylan's perfect melancholy? Bob's music calms me completely… It's impossible to pick one album being superior to than another, but *Blonde On Blonde* is visceral for me."



NEVER MIND THE BOLLOCKS, HERE'S THE SEX PISTOLS 1977
SEX PISTOLS

"Anytime I hear this, my excitement and adrenaline speed up, I can taste it… and the knowledge of the London that caused the Sex Pistols to happen – and happen how they did and when they did and why they did – makes it all the sweeter."

THE BLACK ALBUM 2003
JAY-Z

"The production of hip-hop has so far surpassed rock 'n' roll music… the rhyming, the poetry, the social commentary. *The Black Album* represents me living in NYC and feeling like I owned the streets, walking home at 2am in the morning with my headphones on tight, striding out in time with the rhythm of it."

THE VERY BEST OF... 2006
NINA SIMONE

"What a woman, what a voice, what a musician. What a revolutionary. Though I wish *Pirate Jenny* was on this compilation. I love Nina Simone and I love her interviews, too. I love the way she looks, I love the way she performs. This compilation contains some truly magnificent work." ●

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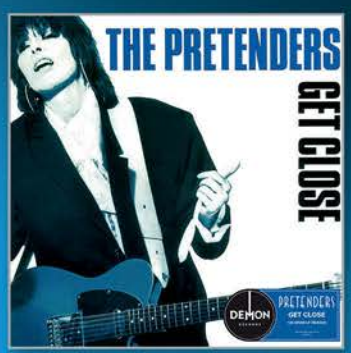

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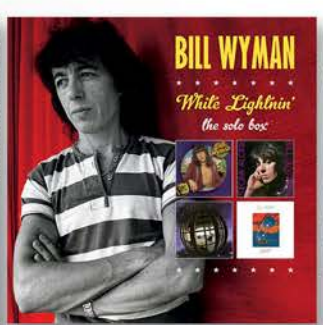

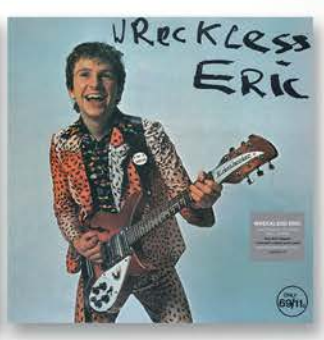

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